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# Jonathan & his Continent

·RAMBLES·THROUGH·AMERICAN·SOCIETY·

BY

## ·Max·O'Rell·

AUTHOR OF
"JOHN BULL & HIS ISLAND"
"FRIEND MACDONALD"
&c.

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*RAMBLES THROUGH AMERICAN SOCIETY*

BY

MAX O'RELL

AUTHOR OF

"JOHN BULL AND HIS ISLAND," "FRIEND MAC DONALD," ETC

AND

JACK ALLYN

TRANSLATED BY

MADAME PAUL BLOUËT

BRISTOL
J. W. ARROWSMITH, 11 QUAY STREET
LONDON
SIMPKIN, MARSHALL & Co., 4 STATIONERS' HALL COURT

1889

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# TO JONATHAN.

You have often asked me to write my impressions of America and the Americans, and your newspapers have been good enough to suggest *Jonathan and his Continent* as a title for the book.

The title is good, and I accept it.

As for the book, since you wish it, here it is. But I must warn you that if ever you should fancy you see in this little volume a deep study of your great country and of your amiable compatriots, your world-wide reputation for humour would be exploded.

However, as my collaborator, Jack Allyn, is an American citizen, some at least of the statements here set down regarding Jonathan ought to have weight and authority.

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# Jonathan and his Continent.

## CHAPTER I.

*Population of America.—An Anecdote about the Sun.—Where is the Centre of America?—Jonathan cannot get over it, nor can I.—America, the Land of Conjuring.—A Letter from Jonathan decides me to set out for the United States.*

THE population of America is about sixty millions—mostly colonels.

Yes, sixty millions—all alive and kicking!

If the earth is small, America is large, and the Americans are immense!

An Englishman was one day boasting to a Frenchman of the immensity of the British Empire.

"Yes, sir," he exclaimed to finish up with, "the sun never sets on the English possessions."

"I am not surprised at that," replied the Frenchman; "the sun is obliged to keep an eye on the rascals."

However, the sun can now travel from New York to San Francisco, and light, on his passage, a free nation which, for the last hundred years, has been pretty successful in her efforts to get on in the world without John Bull's protection.

From east to west, America stretches over a breadth of more than three thousand miles. Here it is as well to put some readers on their guard, in case an American should one day ask them one of his favourite questions: "Where is the centre of America?" I myself imagined that, starting from New York and pushing westward, one would reach the extremity of America on arriving at San Francisco. Not so; and here Jonathan has you. He knows you are going to answer wrongly; and if you want to please him, you must let yourself be caught in this little trap, because it will give him such satisfaction to put you right. At San Francisco, it appears you are not quite half-way, and the centre of America is really the Pacific Ocean. Jonathan more than doubled the width of his continent in 1867, when for the sum of four* million dollars he purchased Alaska of the Russians.

Not satisfied with these immensities, Jonathan delights in contemplating his country through magnifying glasses; and one must forgive him the patriotism which makes him see everything double.

To-day population, progress, civilisation, every thing advances with giant's stride. Towns seem to spring up through the earth. A town with twenty thousand inhabitants, churches, libraries, schools, hotels, and banks, was perhaps, but a year or two ago, a patch of marsh or forest. To-day Paris fashions are followed there as closely as in New York or London.

* I have also heard "seven" million dollars.

In America, everything is on an immense scale: the just pride of the citizens of the young Republic is fed by the grandeur of its rivers, mountains, deserts, cataracts, its suspension bridges, its huge cities, etc.

Jonathan passes his life in admiration of all that is American. He cannot get over it.

I have been through part of the country, and I cannot get over it either. I am out of breath, turned topsy-turvy. It is pure conjuring; it is Robert Houdin over again—occasionally, perhaps, Robert Macaire too—but let us not anticipate. Give me time to recover my breath and set my ideas in order. Those Americans are reeking with *unheard-of-ness*, I can tell you that to begin with. My ideas are all jostling in my poor old European brain. There is no longer anything impossible, and the fairy tales are child's play compared to what we may see every day. Everything is prodigious, done by steam, by electricity; it is dazzling, and I no longer wonder that Americans only use their adjectives in the superlative.

As an illustration of what I advance, here is a letter that I received from an American, in the month of May, 1887, and which finally decided me to go and see America. It is dated from Boston:

"Dear Sir,—I was on the point of taking the boat at twelve to-day to go and have a talk with you about an idea which occurred to me yesterday; but as I have already been across three times this year,

and, in a month or six weeks, shall have to set out for St. Petersburg and Japan, I am desirous, if possible, of arranging the matter I have at heart by correspondence. . . ."

"I must make the acquaintance of that man," I exclaimed; "I must go and see Jonathan at home one of these days."

And as soon as circumstances allowed, I packed my trunks, took a cabin on board one of the brave "White Star" Liners, and set out to see Jonathan and his Continent.

## CHAPTER II.

*Jonathan and his Critics.—An eminent American gives me Salutary Advice. — Travelling Impressions. — Why Jonathan does not love John Bull.*

A FEW days before leaving America, I had a pleasant talk with Mr. Whitelaw Reid, the chief editor of the *New York Tribune*.

"Do not fall into the great error of fancying that you have seen America in six months," he said to me.

"But I do not fancy anything of the kind," I replied; "I have no such pretension. When a man of average intelligence returns home after having made a voyage to a foreign land, he cannot help having formed a certain number of impressions, and he has a right to communicate them to his friends. They are but impressions, notes taken by the wayside; and, if there is an error committed by anyone, it is by the critic or the reader, when either of these looks for a perfect picture of the manners and institutions of the people the author has visited, instead of simple *impressions de voyage*. Certainly, if there is a country in the world that it would be impossible to judge in six months, that country is America; and the author who, in such a little space of time, allowed himself to fall into the error of sitting in judgment

upon her would write himself down an ass. In six months you cannot know America, you cannot even see the country; you can merely get a glimpse of it: but, by the end of a week, you may have been struck with various things, and have taken note of them. A serious study and an impression are two different things, and an error is committed by the person who takes one for the other. For instance, if, in criticising my little volume, you exclaim, 'The author has no deep knowledge of his subject,' it is you who commit an error, and not I. I do not pretend to a deep knowledge of my subject. How would that be possible in so short a time? How should you imagine it to be possible? To form a really exact idea of America, one would need to live twenty years in the country, nay, to be an American; and I may add that, in my opinion, the best books that exist upon the different countries of the world have been written by natives of those countries. Never has an author written of the English like Thackeray; never have the Scotch been painted with such fidelity as by Ramsay; and to describe Tartarin, it needed not only a Frenchman, but a Provençal, almost a Tarasconnais. I say all this to you, Mr. Reid, to warn you that, if on my return to Europe I should publish a little volume on America, it will be a book of impressions; and if you should persist in seeing in it anything but impressions, it is you who will be to blame. But in this matter I trust to the intelligence of those Americans who do me the honour of reading me. I shall be in good hands."

Upon this the editor of the *Tribune* responded, as he shook my hand—

"You are right."

It must be allowed that Jonathan has good reason to mistrust his critics. Most books on America have been written by Englishmen. Now, the English are, of all people, those who can the least easily get rid of their prejudices in speaking of America. They are obliged to admit that the Americans have made their way pretty well since they have been their own masters; but John Bull has always a rankling remembrance, when he looks at America, of the day that the Americans sent him about his business, and his look seems to say to Jonathan: "Yes, yes; you have not done at all badly—for you; but just think what the country would have been by this time if it had remained in my hands."

He looks at everything he sees with a patronising air; with the arrogant calm that makes him, amiable as he is at home, so unbearable when he travels abroad. He expresses cavalierly, criticises freely. He goes over with the firm intention of admiring nothing American. If he finds nothing else to disparage, he will complain of the want of ruins and old cathedrals. He occasionally presents himself at Jonathan's dinner-parties in a tweed suit, fearing to do him too much honour by putting on evening dress. His little talent of making himself disagreeable abroad comes out more strongly in America; and Jonathan, one of whose little weaknesses is love of

approbation, I honestly believe, has a cordial antipathy to the magnificent Briton.

The Englishman, on his side, has no antipathy whatever to the Americans. For that matter, the Englishman has no antipathy for anyone. He despises, but he does not hate; a fact which is irritating to the last degree to the objects of his attention. When a man feels that he has some worth, he likes to be loved or hated: to be treated with indifference is galling. John Bull looks on the American as a *parvenu*, and smiles with incredulity when you say that American society is not only brilliant and witty, but quite as polished as the best European society.

It is this haughty disdain which exasperates Americans.

Jonathan has forgotten that the English were once his oppressors; he forgives them for the war of 1812; without forgetting it, he forgives them for having sided with the slave-owners during the Civil War; but he cannot forgive an Englishman for coming to his dinner-table in a tweed suit.

## CHAPTER III.

*Characteristic Traits.—A Gentleman and a Cad.—Different Ways of Discussing the Merits of a Sermon.—Contradictions and Contrasts.—Sacred and Profane.—Players of Poker on Board Ship.—A Meek and Humble Follower of Jesus.—The Open Sesame of New York, Boston, and Philadelphia.—The Childish Side of American Character.—The Three Questions Jonathan puts to every Foreigner who lands in America.—Preconceived Notions.—Request of an American Journalist.—Why the English and the French do not put Questions on their Countries to the Foreigner who visits them.*

A NATION, scarcely more than a hundred years old, and composed of many widely different elements, cannot, in the nature of things, possess very marked characteristic traits.

There are Americans in plenty, but *the American* does not yet exist.

The inhabitant of the North-east States, the Yankee,* differs as much from the Western man and the Southerner, as the Englishman differs from the German or the Spaniard.

For example, call a Yankee "a cad," and he will get out of the room, remarking, "You say so, sir,

* The word "Yankee" is a corruption of the word "English," and only applies to the people of New England.

but that proves nothing." Call a Pennsylvania man "a cad," and he will get out of temper, and knock you down. Call a real Westerner "a cad," and he will get out his revolver, and shoot you dead on the spot.

On leaving a New York theatre one night, I jumped into a tramcar in Broadway. We were quite sixty persons packed upon the vehicle—sitting, standing, holding on to the rail on the platform, trying to keep our equilibrium as well as we could. A gentleman, well-dressed and looking well-bred, signed to the conductor to stop, and tried to make his way through the crowd. By dint of using his elbows as propellers, he reached the door, and was preparing to alight, when a man, indignant at having been pushed (there are people who, for twopence-halfpenny, expect to travel as comfortably as in a barouche), cried:

"You are a cad, sir—a howling cad!"

The gentleman jumped off the car.

"You are a cad, I say," bellowed the individual after him; "a cad, do you hear?"

The gentleman—for he was one—turned, lifted his hat, and replied:

"Yes; I hear. And you, sir, are a perfect gentleman."

The perfect gentleman looked very silly for a few moments. A hundred yards further on, he stopped the car and made off.

Should a minister indulge in unorthodox theories in the pulpit, the Eastern man will content himself with shaking his head, and going to another church to perform his devotions the Sunday after. The Pennsylvanian will open a violent polemic in the newspaper of the locality; he will not be satisfied with shaking his head, he will shake his fist. The Kansas man will wait for the minister at the church-door, and gave him a sound thrashing.*

The character of the American is English from the point of view of its contrasts and contradictions, which are still more accentuated in him than in the Englishman.

Is there anything more sublime than the way in which Jonathan can combine the sacred and profane? He is a greater adept at it than John Bull, and that is saying not a little.

On board the steamer, we had five Americans who passed eight days of the voyage in playing poker. The smoking-room rang from morning to night with the oaths that they uttered every time they laid a card on the table. They were so fluent with them that they hardly used the same twice in an hour. Their stock seemed inexhaustible. On Sunday, after breakfast, a young lady sat down to the piano, and began playing hymns. What happened then? Our five poker-players gathered round

* I read in a large Eastern daily paper, under the head of "Kansas News": "A clergyman in Kansas has just had his nose bitten off by a member of his flock, who took exception to some of his remarks in the pulpit."

the lady, and for two hours sang psalms and holy tunes to the edification of the other occupants of the saloon.

I was dumbfounded.

In France, we have men who swear and men who sing hymns. The Anglo-Saxon race alone furnishes men who do both with equal gusto.

In what other country than America could such an anecdote as the following be told? It is the most typical anecdote I heard in the United States. It came from Mr. Chauncey Depew, it is said. But, for that matter, when a good story goes the round of the States, it is always put down to Mr. Depew, Mark Twain, or the late Artemus Ward.

A new minister had been appointed in a little Kentucky town. No sooner had he taken possession of his cure, than he set about ornamenting the church with stained-glass windows of gorgeous hues. This proceeding aroused the suspicions of several parishioners, who imagined that their new pastor was inclined to lead them to Rome. A meeting was called, and it was decided to send a deputation to the minister to ask him to explain his conduct, and beg him to have the offending windows removed.

The head of the deputation was an old Presbyterian, whose austerity was well known in the town. He opened fire by addressing the reverend gentleman thus:

"We have waited upon you, sir, to beg that you will remove those painted windows from our church as soon as possible. We are simple folks. God's

daylight is good enough for us, and we don't care to have it shut out by all those images——"

The worthy fellow had prepared a fine harangue, and was going to give the minister the benefit of it all; but the latter, losing patience, thus interrupted him:

"Excuse me, you seem to be taking high ground. Who are you, may I ask?"

"Who I am?" repeated the Presbyterian spokesman. "I'm a meek and humble follower of Jesus, and—d—n you, who are *you?*"

Without travelling very far, without even quitting the eastern coast of America, you will see a complete difference in the spirit of towns that are almost neighbours.

In New York, for instance—I am not speaking now of the literary world, of which I shall speak later—in New York it is your money that will open all doors to you; in Boston, it is your learning; in Philadelphia and Virginia, it is your genealogy. Therefore, if you wish to be a success, parade your dollars in New York, your talents in Boston, and your ancestors in Philadelphia and Richmond.

There is a pronounced childish side to the character of all the Americans. In less than a century they have stridden ahead of the nations of the Old World; they are astonished at their own handiwork, and, like children with a splendid toy of their own manufacture in their hands, they say to you,

"Look! just look, is it not a beauty?" And, indeed, the fact is that, for him who will look at it with unprejudiced eyes, the achievement is simply marvellous.

The Americans like compliments, and are very sensitive to criticism. They have not yet got over Charles Dickens' *American Notes*, nor the still older criticisms of Mrs. Trollope. Scarcely has a foreigner set foot in the United States before they ask him what he thinks of the country. Nine persons out of every ten you speak to put these three questions to you:

"Is this your first visit to America?"

"How long have you been over?"

"How do you like our country?"

There are even some who push curiosity farther, and do not wait until you have arrived to ask you for your opinion on their country.

I had only just embarked on board the *Germanic* at Liverpool, when the purser handed me a letter from America. I opened it, and read:

"Dear Sir,—Could you, during your voyage, write me an article on the United States? I should be happy to have your *preconceived notions* of America and the Americans, so as to publish them in my journal as soon as you arrive."

I do not think I am committing any indiscretion in saying that the letter was signed by the amiable and talented editor of *The Critic*, the first literary journal in the United States.

I had heard that the cabman who drove you to your hotel from the docks asked you, as he opened the door of his vehicle, "Well, sir, and what are your impressions of America?" But to ask me in Liverpool my preconceived notions of America and the Americans, that outdid anything of the kind I had heard on the subject.

An Englishman or a Frenchman will never ask you what you think of England or France. The fact is, they both care little or nothing for the foreigner's opinion. The Frenchman does not doubt that his country is beyond competition. If he enter into the subject at all, it is to congratulate the stranger upon coming to visit it.

The Englishman makes less noise over it. In his provokingly calm manner, he is perfectly persuaded that England is the first country in the world, and that everybody admits it, and the idea of asking an outsider for his opinion of it would never enter his head. He would think it so ridiculous, so amusing, so grotesque, that anyone should tell him England was not at the head of all nations, that he would not take the trouble to resent it. He would pity the person, and there the matter would end.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Types.—Manly Beauty.—The Indian Type.—Second Beauty in the Women of the New World.—Something Wanting in the Beauty of Most American Women.*

THE American men are generally thin. Their faces glow with intelligence and energy, and in this mainly consists their handsomeness. I do not think it can be possible to see anywhere a finer assemblage of men than that which meets at the Century Club of New York every first Saturday of the month. It is not male beauty such as the Greeks portrayed it, but a manly beauty in all its intellectual force. The hair, often abundant, is *négligé*, sometimes even almost disordered-looking; the dress displays taste and care without aiming at elegance; the face is pale and serious, but lights up with an amiable smile: you divine that resolution and gentleness live in harmony in the American character.

The features are bony, the forehead straight, the nose sharp and often pinched-looking in its thinness. One seems at times to recognise in the faces something of the Indian type: the temples indented, the cheek-bones prominent, the eyes small, keen, and deepset.

The well-bred American is, to my mind, a happy combination of the Frenchman and the Englishman,

having less stiffness than the latter, and more simplicity than the former.

As for the women, I do not hesitate to say that in the east, in New York especially, they might be taken for Frenchwomen. It is the same type, the same gait, the same vivacity, the same petulance, the same amplitude of proportions.

The beauty of the American women, like that of the men, is due much more to the animation of the face than to form or colouring. The average of good looks is very high, indeed. I do not remember to have seen one hopelessly plain woman during my six months' ramble in the States.

American women generally enjoy that second youth which Nature bestows also on numbers of Frenchwomen. At forty, they bloom out into a more majestic beauty. The eyes retain their fire and lustre, the skin does not wrinkle, the hands, neck, and arms remain firm and white. It is true that, in America, hair turns grey early; but, so far from detracting from the American woman's charms, it gives her an air of distinction, and is often positively an attraction.

If the Americans descend from the English, their women have not inherited from their grandmothers either their teeth, their hands, or their feet. I have seen, in America, the daintiest little hands and feet in the world (this is not an Americanism).

The New Yorkers and Bostonians will have it to be that Chicago women have enormous feet and hands. I was willing to believe this, up to the day

I went to Chicago. I found the Chicago women, and those of the west generally, pretty, with more colour than their eastern sisters; only, as a rule, quite slight, not to say thin.

That which is lacking in the pretty American faces of the east is colour and freshness. The complexion is pale; and it is only their plumpness, which comes to their rescue after thirty, and prevents them from looking faded. Those who remain thin, generally fade quickly; the complexion becomes the colour of whity-brown paper, and wrinkles freely.

If American women went in for more outdoor exercise; if they let the outer air penetrate constantly into their rooms; if they gave up living in hothouses, they would have some colour, and their beauty need, perhaps, fear no competition in Europe.

## CHAPTER V.

*All that Glitters is not Gold, especially in America.—The Dollar is the Unity of the Metrical System.—Jonathan is Matter-of-fact.—How he judges Man.—The Kind of Baits that Take.—Talent without Money is a Useless Tool.—Boston and Kansas.*

JONATHAN admires all that glitters, even that which is not gold.

In his eyes, the success of a thing answers for its quality, and the charlatanism that succeeds is superior to the merit that vegetates.

The dollar is not only the unity of the monetary system; it is also the unity of the metrical system.

Before assigning a man his standing, people ask him in England, "Who is your father?" in France, "Who are you?" in America, "How much have you?"

Like Professor Teufelsdröckh, the ordinary American judges men with an impartiality and coolness really charming. He admires talent, because it is a paying commodity. A literary or artistic success is only a success, in his eyes, on condition that it is a monetary one as well. He looks upon every man as possessing a certain commercial value. He is worth so much. Such and such a celebrity does not inspire his respect

and admiration because he or she has produced a work of genius, but because the work of genius has produced a fortune. In America, you hear people, when talking of Madame Adelina Patti, speak less of her incomparable voice than of the houses she draws.

I was chatting one day with an American about the famous Robert Ingersoll.

"He is your greatest orator, I am told," I said.

"Oh, yes," he replied. "Ingersoll can fill the Metropolitan Opera House any day, and have five thousand dollars in the house."

Certainly that is a curious way to speak of a great orator, a great writer, and a great thinker.

I need not say that I am now speaking of the ordinary American, not the man of refinement.

It would be quite possible for an actress to attract large audiences all through a tour from New York to San Francisco, not because of incontestable talent, but because she travelled in a magnificent palace-car of her own.

I saw, in an American paper, the appearance of Miss Minnie Palmer spoken of in the following terms:

"Minnie Palmer will wear all her diamonds in the third act."

The booking-office was besieged all day, and in the evening money was refused. An amusing detail was the arrival of a good fourth of the audience at ten o'clock, to see the diamonds in the third act.

This necessity for being rich is the reverse side of the medal in America, where, more than anywhere else, talent without money is a useless tool.

America suffers from this state of things. The country's genius, instead of consecrating all its time to the production of works which would tend to elevate the ideas and aspirations of the people, is obliged to think of money-making.

"Ah! my friend," said one of America's most graceful bards to me one day as he touched his forehead, "it seems to me that I have something there, that I possess the *feu sacré*, and that I might do a little share of good by my writings. But how write poems, when there are rumours of panic in Wall Street?—— Excuse me, I have not a moment to lose; I must rush to the Stock Exchange."

The American authors, most of them, only take up the pen at odd hours. Business first. Mark Twain is a publisher; Oliver Wendell Holmes is a doctor; Edmund Clarence Stedman is a stockbroker; Robert Ingersoll, an advocate; George Cable, a public lecturer; and James Russell Lowell is a diplomatist. The rest are journalists. There are few, indeed, who live by book-writing.

However, perhaps a day will come when American law will prevent publishers from stealing the works of European writers, and publishing them at low prices; then American authors, having no longer to fear this unjust competition, may be able to sell their books in sufficient numbers to allow them to pay their landlord and tradesmen out of the profits.

When that day comes, American literature will spread its pinions and rise to prodigious heights.

In a country governed by Protectionists, it does seem strange that national products should all be protected except the products of the brain. Such an anomaly cannot certainly endure. The moral sense of the people will triumph. Boston, not Kansas, must win.

Unluckily, the Copyright Bill has the misfortune to be desired by the English; and this is quite enough for the Washington politicians to refuse to pass it, although the Americans desire it no less than the English, if not more.

## CHAPTER VI.

*Diamonds.—How Diamonds are Won and Lost in Tripping.—The Sweat of Jonathan's brow crystallized in his Wife's Ears.—Avarice is a vice little known in America.—Jonathan is not the Slave of the Almighty Dollar to the Extent that he is believed to be.*

MAN has been perpetuated to expiate the transgression of his first parent by hard labour. Jonathan is a proof of it.

He labours, he toils, and the sweat of his brow crystallizes upon the neck and arms of his beloved womankind in the form of diamonds.

To the American woman the diamond is not an object of luxury, it is an object of prime necessity. An English old maid would do without her tea before an American woman would go without diamonds.

Oh, those diamonds in America! You see them wherever you go! Not one woman in a hundred will you see without a pair of them in her ears. It is an obsession.

Diamonds, at night with evening dress and artificial light, are things of beauty: but diamonds in the street with morning dress, at early breakfast in company with morning wrappers; diamonds in the ears, at the neck, in the bonnet-strings, on arms, on

fingers, diamonds all day long and everywhere, it is a remnant of savagery. Nay, I saw diamonds on shoe-buckles one day in broad day in a shop.

"There is a woman who is not afraid of tripping and losing her diamonds," said I to myself; "but perhaps she got them the same way that she might have lost them. Certainly she cannot be a lady." However, it appears she was, and a well-known figure in New York Society. So I was told by the manager of the establishment, who was at the time showing me over his magnificent rooms.

If good style consists in not doing what the vulgar do, good style in America ought to consist for one thing in not wearing diamonds—unless democracy should demand this sign of equality.

Diamonds are worn by the woman of fashion, the tradesman's wife, shop-girls, work-girls, and servants; and if you see a shabbily-dressed woman who has not a pair in her ears, you may take it for granted that she has put them in pawn.

Naturally, in America, as elsewhere, all that sparkles is not diamond.

When you see diamonds in the ears of shop-girls and factory-girls, they are sham gems bought with well-earned money, or real ones bought with badly-earned money.

I have seen pretty women completely disfigure themselves by hanging enormous diamonds in their ears. These ear-drops had a very high commercial value; but artistic value, none. There is a defect, which seems to exist everywhere in America—a dis-

position to imagine that the value of things is in proportion to their size.

Love of woman, innate in the American, is not enough in itself to explain the luxury that man lavishes on her in the United States. America is not the only country where man is devoted to woman and ready to satisfy all her caprices. The Frenchman is as keenly alive to her influences as the American, if not more.

The luxury of the American woman must be explained in another way.

Money is easily earned in the United States, and is freely spent. Business savours more of gambling than of commerce in the proper sense of the word.

Jonathan, then, is in a position much like that of a man whom I saw give a hundred franc note to a beggar one day in the streets of Monte Carlo. "If I win at *trente et quarante*," said he to some one who asked him how he could do such a foolish thing, "what are a hundred francs to me? I can afford to be generous to a poor fellow-creature out of it; if I lose, it is so much that the *croupier* will not get." When Jonathan covers his wife with diamonds, he says to himself: "If I win, I can indulge my wife without inconveniencing myself; if I lose, it is so much saved from the fray."

This is not all.

If the American thirsts after money, it is not for the love of money as a rule, but for the love of that which money can buy. In other words, avarice is a

vice almost unknown in America. Jonathan does not amass gold for the pleasure of adding pile to pile and counting it. He pursues wealth to improve his position in life and to surround those dependent upon him with advantages and luxuries. He spends his money as gaily as he pockets it, especially when it is a question of gratifying his wife or daughters, who are the objects of his most assiduous attention. He is the first to admit that their love for diamonds is as absurd as it is costly, but he is good-humoured and says, "Since they like them, why should they not have them?"

In Europe, there is a false notion that Jonathan thinks only of money, that he passes his life in the worship of the almighty dollar. It is an error. I believe that at heart he cares but little for money. If a millionaire inspires respect, it is as much for the activity and talent he has displayed in the winning of his fortune as for the dollars themselves. An American, who had nothing but his dollars to boast of, might easily see all English doors open to him, but his millions alone would not give him the *entrée* into the best society of Boston and New York. There he would be requested to produce some other recommendation. An American girl who was rich, but plain and stupid, would always find some English duke, French marquis, or Italian count, ready to marry her, but she would have great difficulty in finding an American gentleman who would look upon her fortune or her *dot* as a sufficient indemnity.

At a public dinner, the millionaire does not find a

place of honour reserved for him, as he would in England. The seats of honour are reserved for men of talent. Even in politics, money does not lead to honours.

No, the Americans do not worship the Golden Calf, as Europeans are often pleased to imagine.

As to the ladies, that is different—but we shall speak of them in another chapter.

## CHAPTER VII.

*Notes on the great American Cities.—New York.—Boston.—A Visit to Oliver Wendell Holmes.—Washington.—Mount Vernon.—Philadelphia.—Chicago.—Rivalry between these Cities.—Jokes they indulge in at each other's Expense.*

THE large cities do not constitute the real America. To gain a correct idea of the country, one must go and see those hundreds, nay thousands, of flourishing little towns which spring up day by day on that immense continent.

I went to America too late, and left it too early, to be able to enjoy and admire its natural beauties. The trees were shorn of their magnificent foliage, the Indian summer was just over, and forest and prairie were alike bare and brown. No matter: I dread descriptions of scenery, and I could not have done justice to the subject. Men interest me more than rivers, rocks, and trees. I cannot describe Nature, and it is human nature that attracts me most.

Great cities surely have their interest, especially those of the United States, which, with the exception of New York, have each their own particular characteristics.

The city of New York is built upon an island about nine miles long, half a mile broad at the south,

and about two and a half broad at the north. This island has the form of a tongue.

The city looks like a slice of honeycomb on the map: twelve great arteries run from north to south, crossed at right angles by over a hundred streets forming an immense number of "blocks," as they are called.

Except in the city proper, where they have particular names, the streets are all numbered: 1st Street, 2nd Street, 125th Street, and so on. The great arteries take the name of Avenues, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, up to 11th, besides Broadway which crosses the city diagonally.

It will readily be seen that nothing is easier than to find a house situated in such and such a street, at such and such a number. So many streets, so many blocks, and you are at your destination without trouble. The thing which puzzled my wits was to remember the addresses of my acquaintances: No. 103, East 15th Street; 144, West 26th Street; 134, West 33rd Street; 177, East 48th Street; 154, West 72nd Street; 400, Fifth Avenue. You can readily imagine the perplexity of the unfortunate foreigner who finds himself, at the end of a few days, confronted with this difficulty and with a score of calls to pay.

As I looked at the New Yorkers walking along the streets with that preoccupied look of theirs, I said to myself: "Those good people must be trying to keep their address in mind, and are repeating it over to themselves all the time."

It is of no use looking in New York for monuments in the sense which we attach to the word in Europe. There are massive buildings, and a few handsome churches, but nothing which arrests your gaze. The houses in the best parts of the town are built of brown stone, in the English style. In the populous quarters many are of red brick, with green shutters on the outside.

The streets are horribly ill paved. From my windows, which looked on Madison Square, the carriages appeared to rise and fall as if on a troubled sea. Drunkards have had to drop their habits: they could not reach home from the beer saloons.

Three fine squares alone break the monotony of all these parallelograms of streets: Washington Square, Union Square, and Madison Square.

On the north, Central Park, with its fine avenues, its hillocks, its valleys, its lakes, and its magnificent terrace over the Hudson, is a very lovely pleasure ground. It is the only place where one can see trees, turf, and flowers. New York does not possess a single garden, public or private, if one excepts the three squares I named just now.

That which strikes the visitor to New York is not the city itself, but the feverish activity that reigns there.

Overhead is a network of telegraph and telephone wires; on the ground a network of rails. It is estimated that there are more than 12,000 miles of telegraph wires suspended over the heads of the passers by: about enough to go half round the world.

The whistles of the boats that ply between New York and Brooklyn on the East River, and between New York and Jersey City on the Hudson, keep up, day and night until one in the morning, a noise which is like the roar of wild beasts. It is the cry of Matter under the yoke of Man. It is like living in a menagerie.

In almost every street tramcars pass every few minutes. It is an incessant procession. In Broadway alone there are more than three hundred. The cars, as they are always called in America, are magical, like everything American. Built to carry twenty-four persons inside (there are no seats on the top), they are made to hold sixty and more. In fact, no matter how full they are, there is always room for one more. The conductor never refuses to let you get on board. You hang on to the rail beside the driver or conductor, if it is not possible to squeeze yourself inside and hold on to the leather straps provided for the purpose; you gasp for breath, it is all you can do to get at your pocket to extract the five cents which you owe the car company; but the conductor cries in his imperturbable nasal drawl: "Move forward, make room." If you do not like it, you have the alternative of walking. These cars are drawn by two horses. At night, when the theatres are emptying and the loads are heaviest, is just the time when the stoppages are most frequent—someone gets on or alights at every block; the strain on the horses must be tremendous.

Cabs are few. This is not wonderful, seeing

that the lowest fare is a dollar or a dollar and half.

In Third Avenue and Sixth Avenue, you find the overhead railway called "the Elevated." It is supported on iron pillars, and the trains run along on a level with the upper windows of the houses. This company carries every day the fabulous number of 500,000 passengers.

All the existing means of transit are acknowledged to be insufficient, and an underground railway is talked of. There will soon be travellers under ground, on the ground, and in the air. Poor Hercules, where are you with your *ne plus ultra?* You had reckoned without your Yankee.

The streets, ill-paved and dirty, are dangerous in winter. Coachmen do not check their horses for the foot passengers, but neither do they try to run over them. They strike the middle course between the London coachman, who avoids them, and the Parisian one, who aims at them.

At the corner of each block there is a letter-box. If you have any newspapers or extra large letters to post, you lay them on the box and trust to the honesty of the passers-by. If rain comes on, so much the worse. If you want stamps, you go to the chemist and buy a lotion or potion, taking occasion at the same time to buy your stamps. Post-offices are few and far between.

The populous quarters, such as the Chinese quarter, the Italian quarter, the Jewish quarter, with their tenement-houses—those barracks of the poor, which I visited one day in company with a sanitary engineer —remind one of Dante's descriptions: it is a descent, or rather an ascent, into hell. I spare the reader the impressions which that day left upon me. Horrible! A populace composed of the offscourings of all nations —the dirtiest, roughest, one can imagine.

Hard by this frightful squalor, Fifth Avenue, with its palaces full of the riches of the earth. It is the eternal history of large cities.

As in London, hundreds of churches and taverns (called beer saloons): it is the same ignoble Anglo-Saxon mixture of bible and beer, of the spiritual and the spirituous.

New York is probably the most cosmopolitan city in the world. To give an idea of it, I may tell you that there are newspapers published there in English, French, German, Russian, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, Dutch, Hungarian, Chinese, and Hebrew.

I received one day a circular of a meeting of the "Knights of Labour." It was printed in six different languages.

The streets are wide, bright, and animated; the shops handsome. In Broadway and Union Square the jewellers and confectioners flourish, pretty flower-shops abound: it is Paris, rather than London, without, however, being one or the other.

As I said before, there are no grand buildings to

to invite one's gaze to rest; to rejoice the eyes, one must penetrate into the houses of the rich.

There is a small collection of pictures in the Museum in the Central Park; but most of the art treasures of America are to be found in private collections.

Boston (pronounced *Boast'on*) is quite an English city, handsomely and solidly built. It has a public garden in the centre, the effect of which at night is enchanting.

It is the most scholarly city of the United States—one of the greatest centres of erudition in the world.

Boston Society is less showy than that of New York, the women have, perhaps, less *chic*, but they have more colour in their faces and more repose in their manner.

Nothing is more diverting than to hear the dwellers in each great American town criticise the dwellers in the others. All these societies, each almost in its infancy as yet, are jealous one of another. At Boston, for instance, you will be told that the Chicago people are all pig-stickers and pork-packers. In Chicago, you will hear that Boston is composed of nothing but prigs and *précieuses ridicules*.

Allow for a large amount of exaggeration, and there remains a certain foundation of truth.

The English spoken in Boston is purer than any to be heard elsewhere in the North. The voices are less harsh and nasal, the language ceases to be *vurry, vurry Amurracan*. If you think yourself in England,

as you walk along the streets, the illusion becomes complete when you hear the well-bred people speak.

All the anecdotes told in America on the subject of Boston are satires upon the presumptuous character of the Bostonian, who considers Boston the centre of the universe.

Here is one of the many hundreds I heard:

A Boston man has lost his wife. As soon as telephonic communication is established between that city and Paradise, he rings and cries:

"Hello!"

"Hello!" from the other end.

"Is that you, Artemisia?"

"Yes, dear."

"Well, my love, and how do you like it up there?"

"Oh, it is very nice of course——but it isn't Boston."

Another, equally quiet, is this:

Two ladies walking along the road, in the environs of Boston, came to a mile-stone bearing the inscription:

I M
FROM
BOSTON.

"How simple! how touching!" exclaimed one of the ladies, taking it for a grave-stone; "nothing but these words: 'I 'm from Boston.'"

Boston, and the whole State of Massachussets, of which it is the chief city, are the homes of most of the

literary celebrities of America. Longfellow lived there; Whittier, Lowell, and Holmes live there still; Mr. Howells and Henry James are Boston men, I believe.

Before leaving Boston, I had the pleasure of seeing Oliver Wendell Holmes at home.

The Doctor received me in his study, a fine room well lined with books, and having large windows overlooking the river Charles and facing his Harvard University. Lit by the setting sun, the picture from the windows was alone worth going to see. The Doctor's reception was most cordial.

He is a small man, looking about seventy-five; but the expression of his face is young, and will always be so, I imagine. His smile is clever-looking, sweet, and full of contagious gaiety. Thick bushy grey eyebrows, which stand out, and a protruding under-lip, make his profile odd looking. The eyes are twinkling with humour—and good humour. Philosopher, poet, and humorist are written plainly on the face.

The Doctor was soon chatting about his last trip to Europe, and how, though it was August, he went over to Paris to revisit the haunts of his youth, where he had studied medicine (he was lecturer on anatomy in Boston Hospital up to four years ago); how he found it a desert void of all the "old familiar faces;" but his daughter shopped to her satisfaction.

Then turning to modern French literature:

"Who will ever say again that France has no humorists?" remarked the Doctor. "I have been delighting in Daudet's *Tartarin*."

At the very thought of the Tarasconnais' droll adventures, he laughed. The Autocrat's laugh is, as I said, infectious. It is quick, merry, hearty; he shakes over it in a way not common with any but stout people.

Skipping past other light literature, he stopped to say a word of admiration for Zola's wonderful descriptions of Paris—in fact, for the artist that is in him—but regretted, as everyone does, that such a great writer should prostitute his genius.

Hung upon the wall in a corner was a caricature of "the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," one of the *Vanity Fair* series. Upon my espying it, the dear old Doctor said, with his merry laugh: "There, you see, I am not a vain man, or I should hide that away."

Vain, no, Oliver Wendell Holmes is the personification of simplicity and good humour; a sunny-hearted man, with a lively enjoyment still of the pleasures of society.

A lady friend told me that, meeting him one day after he had had an ovation somewhere, she asked him:

"Well, Doctor, and are you not getting a little tired of all this cheering and applause?"

"Not a bit," replied he; "they never greet me loud enough, or clap long enough, to please me."

Washington is the sole American city which has monuments that can strike the European with admiration for their beauty. The Capitol, the Govern-

ment buildings, the museums, built in the midst of handsome gardens, all arrest the eye of the visitor.

The Capitol, 751 feet long, built of white marble, with a superb dome and majestic flights of steps, is one of the grandest, most imposing-looking, edifices in the world. The souvenirs attached to it, and the treasures it contains, render it dear to the Americans: it is a monument which recalls to their minds the glories of the past, and keeps alight the flame of patriotism.

A general, who served through the great Civil War, told me he had seen strong men, soldiers brought up in remote States, sit down and weep with emotion at seeing the Capitol for the first time.

At one end of the building there is the House of Representatives; in the other wing, the Senate. As for the national treasures contained in the Capitol, I refer the reader to guide-books for them.

The Americans, determined for once to be beyond suspicion in employing an adjective in the superlative degree, followed by the traditional "in the world," have erected, to the memory of General Washington, an obelisk 555 feet high. It is therefore the highest in the world, without any inverted commas.

The town is prettily laid out, somewhat in the form of a spider's web. The streets are wide, the houses coquettish-looking, the gardens, especially the park of the Soldier's Home, extremely beautiful.

Washington is wholly given over to politics.

When Congress is not sitting, it is dead; when Congress is sitting, it is delirious.

Little or no commerce is done.

No visitor leaves Washington without making a pilgrimage to Mount Vernon, where Washington is buried, and where everything speaks of him who was "first in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen."

A journey of an hour and a half up the beautiful Potomac, every turn of which discloses a fresh panorama, brings you to the woods of Mount Vernon.

The house, a wooden structure with a piazza along the front, stands on a considerable elevation, and commands a fine view of winding river and wooded banks. One is seized with admiration at the sight of all this beauty, as one stands upon the threshold of the old home of America's liberator.

It was here, in this peaceful country-house, that lived, like the most modest of America's sons, the man who was the greatest hero of modern times. A feeling of reverent admiration fills you as you enter the quaint little hall.

Each room is kept up at the expense of one of the thirty-three States of the Union. Everything has been arranged, as nearly as possible, to represent the state of the house at the time Washington lived in it.

In the hall hangs the key of the Bastille presented in 1789 by Lafayette to the "Great friend of Liberty."

There is an interesting little souvenir attaching

to the history of the banquet hall. This room was built in 1784, and finished at the time of Lafayette's third visit to America. He and several French noblemen were visiting Mount Vernon, and a ball was to be given in their honour. A handsome wall-paper, imported from England, had arrived; but the paper-hangers had not arrived, greatly to Mrs. Washington's annoyance. Seeing his hostess grow distressed over the delay of the workmen, Lafayette, with characteristic enthusiasm, said to her:

"Do not despair, Madame; we are three or four able-bodied men, who will soon make short work of it."

And, without more ado, the marquis and his friends set about papering the walls, and were soon joined by Washington himself, who proved a vigorous and efficient help.

The tomb of the General is of the simplest description; but it evokes far more touching memories than the magnificent sarcophagus of Napoleon in the Church of the *Invalides*. I never felt more sincerely impressed and touched than at Mount Vernon.

Philadelphia, formerly the capital of the United States, is a city of eight or nine hundred thousand inhabitants, and is built like New York, in parallelograms. Its Town Hall is, next to the Capitol at Washington, the finest edifice in America. I do not know anything to compare to its splendid park, unless it be the Bois de Boulogne in Paris. The alleys of this park, if put together, would cover about

sixty miles in length—so said a Philadelphian, who added: "therefore it is the biggest park in the world." Seen after New York or the busy western cities, Philadelphia strikes one as monotonous. It is full of all kinds of manufactories, however, this Quaker city of quiet streets and sober people.

On the shores of Lake Michigan there stood a rather insignificant town, built of wood, and peopled by a few thousand inhabitants. This town was called Chicago.

On the evening of the 8th of October, 1871, a cow, that an old woman was milking in a barn, kicked over a lamp and set fire to the structure. The flames spread, and on the morrow of that terrible night the whole city was level with the ground. The Chicago people of to-day show, as a curiosity to the visitor, the only house which escaped the flames.

At the present time, this city, like the phœnix of which she is the living and gigantic emblem, stands, rebuilt in hewn stone, and holding 800,000 inhabitants.

Such is America.

In less than twenty years, Omaha, Kansas, Denver, Minneapolis, will be so many Chicagos. Cincinnati, St. Louis, and Louisville will rival her in five.

Chicago is, in my eyes, the very type of the American city—the most striking example of what Jonathan calls *go-a-headism*.

The streets are twice as wide as the Parisian boulevards, the houses of business are eight, ten, twelve stories high. Michigan Avenue is seven miles long: the numbers of the houses run up to three thousand and something. The city has parks, lovely drives by the Lake Shore; statues, including a splendid one of Abraham Lincoln; public buildings imposing in their massiveness, fine theatres and churches; luxurious clubs, hotels inside which four good sized Parisian ones could dance a quadrille, etc., etc.

Michigan Avenue and Prairie Avenue are extremely handsome. Picture to yourself the Avenue of the Bois de Boulogne prolonged for seven miles in a straight line, and imagine the effect, the beautiful vista, when this is lit up at night, or when the trees, with which both these grand roads are planted, are in all their fresh spring beauty.

In these avenues American eccentricity has been allowed free play. The houses are built in all imaginable styles of architecture: some of them are Florentine, some English, others Moorish, others a mixture of all three; others, again, look like Greek temples, whilst here and there you come across what looks like a little Gothic church, and close alongside mediæval castles in miniature, or an imitation of mosques; some have the look of villas in the Paris suburbs; some have been modelled upon Swiss châlets, others upon the residence of some pacha on the borders of the Bosphorus. There are styles for all tastes.

The American may be eccentric, or what you will, but he is never monotonous.

Enter one of these houses, and you will see handsome furniture, not only rich, but in good taste.

Riches beget the taste for literature and the arts; perhaps one day it will beget the taste for simplicity. I was not astonished to find Chicago society genial, polished, and well read. You find here still more warmth and much less constraint than in the East. You feel that you have quitted the realms of New England puritanism. No frigidity here; people give free play to their sentiments. If I had to name the most sympathetic of my American audiences, the warmest* and promptest to seize the significance of a look or gesture, I should name the one which I had the honour of addressing in Chicago.

At seven in the morning every man is astir and at work, whether he be millionaire or poor clerk. As I have mentioned elsewhere, only the idle are outside the pale of respectability in Chicago.

The business done in Chicago is fabulous. The money value of the total trade last year, I am told, reached the immense sum of 227 millions sterling. The aggregate bank clearings amounted to about 612 millions sterling. 2,383,000 cattle are slaughtered, and 6,250,000 barrels of flour received. Chicago is probably the most flourishing city in America — therefore in the world, as Jonathan

*I have had this opinion corroborated since by all the public speakers and artists with whom I have spoken on the subject.

would put it. I give these figures also to show that divine wrath does not seem to fall upon this city which opens its places of recreation on Sundays.

Twenty railway lines, besides local ones, have termini at Chicago. The total mileages of Chicago railroads is 28,817. Stop and catch your breath!

I do not think it is possible for a European to imagine the activity which reigns in Chicago without seeing it.

"You will soon be inventing," I said to a resident, "a machine that will take a live rabbit at one end, and turn out a chimney-pot hat at the other.

"We have done something very like it already," he replied.

And next morning he took me to see the famous pig-killing and pork-packing premises of Philip Armour and Co.

Picture to yourself a series of rooms connecting. In the first, 5,000 pigs a day are killed; in the second, they are scraped as they come out of a cauldron of scalding water; in the third, the heads are cut off; and so on, and so on. The process is somewhat sickening, and I will not enter into any more details. At the end of the establishment the poor pigs are presented to you under the forms of bacon, sausage, galantine, etc. The various processes take place with all the rapidity of conjuring.

What will they not invent in Chicago? That which looks like a joke to-day may be a reality next week; and I shall not be surprised, next time I go to Chicago, to find that the talking power of women

has been utilized as a motor for sewing machines by connecting the chin with the wheel.

How leave Chicago without mentioning the adieux that reached me at my hotel during the hour before I left for Canada?

Ding-rrrring, goes the telephone bell.

"Hello!"

"Hello!"

"Good-bye; good luck!"

"Hello!"

"Pleasant journey!"

"Hello!"

"Good-bye; our compliments to John Bull!"

## CHAPTER VIII.

*American Houses.—Furniture.—Luxury.—The Clubs.—An Evening at the Authors' Club.—An Eyesore.—A Wonderful Shot.—Bang, right in the Bull's-eye!*

AMERICAN houses are furnished very luxuriously, and for the most part in exquisite taste. Here you see the influence of woman in the smallest details of life; indeed, at every step you take, you see that woman has passed that way.

Decorations and furniture, in New York especially, are dark, substantial, and artistic. The liberal use of *portières* adds greatly to the richness of effect. Even in the hall, doors are replaced by hangings. On all sides there is pleasure for the eyes, whether it rests on furniture, walls, or ceilings. The floors are covered with rich carpets, and the ceilings are invariably decorated in harmony with the rest of the room.

The reception-rooms are on the ground-floor, which is always twelve or fifteen feet above the sidewalk. The suite is composed of three or four rooms (sometimes more), divided one from another by *portières*. Each room is in a different style. One contains dark furniture and hangings, oil paintings, costly art treasures, majestical tropical plants; another, in Oriental style, invites the visitor to cosy

chats among its divans and screens; another, perhaps, has books, etchings, and antiquities of all kinds; another, in the style of a boudoir, will be strewn with knick-knacks, light bric-à-brac, water-colours, statuettes, etc., in artistic disorder; yet another may serve as music-room—here, no carpets, the parquet floor is waxed, the walls are unadorned—all has been thought out with intelligence. Flowers in every room shed sweet fragrance. When all the suite is lighted up, and the *portières* looped back, the effect is enchanting; and when a score of American women, elegant, handsome, and witty, add life to the scene, I can assure you that you are not in a hurry to consult your watch.

The luxury, displayed at receptions, dinners, and dances, surpasses European imagination. At a ball, given in New York in the month of February, 1888, the walls were covered with roses, which did not cost less than £2,000. When one considers that the supper, and everything else, was on the same scale, it becomes doubtful whether such luxury is to be admired. I was present one evening at a dinner, given in the large dining-hall at Delmonico's restaurant, New York. We were eighty-seven guests at an immense round table. The centre of the board was covered with a gigantic star of flowers, roses, arum lilies, and heliotrope. At that season lilies were worth a dollar each; and, all through the winter, the price of roses was from a quarter to two dollars apiece, according to kind. The Americans at this feast estimated the star of flowers at £1,500 or £1,600.

At a dinner party given recently at Delmonico's, I heard that each *menu* had a chain attached, consisting of pearls and diamonds, and valued at 1,000 dollars. Is this luxury? Surely it is bad taste, not to say vulgarity.

The principal clubs, in the large American cities, are princely habitations, full of everything that can minister to man's well-being. The American clubs are as luxurious as those of London; but this is the only resemblance which there is between them. The clubs, in large English towns, are sad and solemn; those in the American cities are bright and gay. In New York, Boston, Chicago, etc., the club is not merely a place where a man goes to read the papers, or to dine when his family is out of town; it is a place where men meet for converse, and to enjoy various relaxations. All the members know each other almost intimately.

The doors of American clubs are often opened to ladies, except in Boston, I am told, where no opportunity for the display of Anglomania is neglected. I was present at a very grand ball given by the Union League Club of New York; and when I lectured in the Union League Club of Chicago, at the invitation of the members, there were a great number of ladies invited to be present.

Americans amuse themselves gaily, and ladies are always of the party. They have not the English tendency to convert their pleasures into funeral services.

The hospitality of American clubs is thoughtfully and generously extended to foreigners who visit the States. I had not been a fortnight in America before I was "put up" as honorary member of nearly all the New York clubs. In the other large cities I visited, I met with the same amiability, the same eager expression of cordiality.

A charming little club, but this one has no pretension to luxuriousness, is the Authors' Club in New York. It only has three rooms, very modestly furnished, where one may meet some of America's most charming writers, playing at Bohemia, and chatting over a cigar. Once a fortnight there is a reunion. A simple supper is served at ten o'clock: roast chickens, green peas, and potatoes; cheese and beer. The members are waiting to introduce champagne until Congress has passed the International Copyright Bill. One hardly thinks of the fare in the company of this aristocracy of American talent and intellect. To these gentlemen I owe many a delightful hour passed in their midst.

A very interesting little ceremony takes place at the Authors' Club on New Year's night. On the evening of the 31st December the members of the club muster in force at their snug quarters in Twenty-fourth Street. At two or three minutes to twelve all the lights are put out, and "Auld lang syne" is sung in chorus, to bid good-bye to the year that is passing away. As soon as the clock has struck the midnight hour*, the lights are relit, all the company

* I think a clock is borrowed for the occasion.

strike up "He 's a jolly good fellow," and there is a general hand-shaking and wishing of good wishes for the coming year. Then everyone dives into his memory for an anecdote, a good joke, or an amusing reminiscence, and the evening is prolonged till two or three o'clock. I had the good luck to be present at the last of these merry meetings. Mark Twain presided, and I need not tell you with what spirited and inexhaustible mirth the celebrated humorist did the honours of the evening.

In houses, in clubs, in offices, one cannot help admiring the ingenious forethought, the wonderful care, with which the smallest wants and the slightest commodities of life have been studied: it seems as if there were nothing left to desire.

It is impossible, however, in speaking of American interiors, to pass over in silence a certain eyesore, which meets your sight at every turn.

The most indispensable, most conspicuous, piece of furniture in America is the spittoon. All rooms are provided with this object of prime necessity; you find one beside your seat in the trains, under your table in the restaurants: impossible to escape the sight of the ugly utensil. In the hotel corridors, there is a spittoon standing sentinel outside every door. In public edifices, the floors are dotted with them, and they form the line all up the stairs.

The Americans, used to these targets from the tenderest age, are marvellously adroit at the use of them: they never miss their aim. I saw some really

striking feats of marksmanship; but perhaps the best of all at the Capitol, in Washington.

The Supreme Court of Judicature was sitting. As I entered, an advocate was launching thunders of eloquence. All at once he stopped, looked at a spittoon which stood two yards off, aimed at it, and, krrron, craaahk, ptu!—right in the bull's-eye! Then on he went with his harangue. I looked to see the seven judges and the public applaud and cry "Bravo!" Not a murmur; the incident passed completely unnoticed. Probably there was not a man in the hall who could not say to himself: "There 's nothing in that; I could do as much."

## CHAPTER IX.

*Society Jottings.—Blue Blood in the United States.—Fashionable Society.—Plutocracy.—Parvenus and Arrivés.—Literary and Artistic Society.—Provincialism.—All the Americans have two Family Names.—Colonels and Judges.—American Hospitality.—Terrapin and Raw Duck.*

A WORD about American aristocracy, to begin with.

What, American aristocracy?

Yes, certainly.

I assure you that there exist, in America, social sanctuaries into which it is more difficult to penetrate than into the most exclusive mansions of the Faubourg Saint-Germain or of Mayfair and Belgravia.

There are in Philadelphia; in Beacon Street, Boston; in Washington Square (north side), New York; in Virginia; in Canal Street (right side), New Orleans, Americans who look upon common mortals with much more pity and contempt than the Montmorencys of France or the Howards of England.

Americans, not having any king to give them titles of nobility, have created an aristocracy for themselves. This aristocracy boasts as yet no dukes, marquises, earls, or barons, but the blue blood is there, it appears—Dutch blood—and that is sufficient.

When a European nobleman arrives in the States, the American aristocracy leave cards upon him at

the hotel where he has alighted. He may perhaps be personally known to none; but all nobilities are kindred everywhere—it is an act of international courtesy. The European nobleman, who often goes to America for a dowried wife, is much obliged to them, and returns all the visits paid him.

A New York lady, who is quite an authority upon such matters, told me one day that Society in New York was composed of only four hundred persons. Outside this company of *élite*, all Philistines.

Money or celebrity may allow you to enter into this charmed circle, but you will never belong to it. You will be in it, but not of it. The lady in question entered also into very minute details on the subject of what she called the difference between "Society people" and "people in Society"; but, in spite of all her explanations, I confess I did not seize all the delicate *nuances* she tried to convey. All I clearly understood was that the aristocracy of birth exists in America, not only in the brains of those who form part of it, but in the eyes of their compatriots.

The desire to establish an aristocracy of some sort was bound to haunt the breast of the Americans; it was the only thing that their dollars seemed unable to procure them.

The second aristocracy is the aristocracy of money —plutocracy. To belong to this it is not sufficient to be a millionaire; you must, I am told, belong to a third generation of millionaires. Of such are the Astors, Vanderbilts, and company. Three quarters

of "nobility" are the necessary key to this little world. The first generation makes the millions, the second generation is *parvenue*, the third is *arrivée*. In the eyes of these people to have from five to ten thousand a year is to be in decent poverty; to have forty or fifty thousand a year is to be in easy circumstances.

The third aristocracy is the aristocracy of talent, literary and artistic society. This third aristocracy is incontestably the first, if you will excuse the Hibernianism.

I do not think that one could find anywhere, or even imagine, a society more cultivated, more affable, more hospitable, more witty, or more brilliant. I should like just here to indulge in a string of adjectives *à la* Mme. de Sévigné.

One of the consequences of the position which woman takes in the United States is that, in good American drawing-rooms, conversation is never dull.

"If I were queen," exclaimed Mme. Récamier one day, "I would command Mme. de Staël to talk to me all day long." One would like to be able to give the same order to plenty of American women. In their company conversation never flags, and always remains within the domains of *causerie*; they glide lightly from one subject to another, extracting something fresh from each; pass from the serious to the gay, even to the frivolous, without becoming common-place; soar again to lofty heights, but do not disdain to come down to gossip for a minute or

two: all this without a grain of affectation, but with a charm of naturalness that is delightfully winning.

Frenchwomen are the only ones I know who can compare with the American lady in charm of conversation; and, even then, I am obliged to admit two things: that the American women of intellectual society are often more natural than their French rivals, and that they make less effort to charm. In a word, with them you are amiable without having to be gallant; and none of those stereotyped compliments, which so often spoil the charm of a conversation between a man and a woman, are expected of you.

In this society the reunions are not only veritable feasts for the mind; the heart also plays its part. You are welcomed with such cordiality that you feel at once among friends—friends whom you will have profound regret at being obliged to quit so soon, and with whom you hope to keep up relations all your days.

When the steamer left New York harbour, and I was bound for Europe, I hardly knew whether the desire to see my own country again was stronger than my regret at leaving America.

After all, thought I, I am not saying *adieu* to the Americans, but *au revoir;* a seven days' journey, and I can be among them again.

The large towns of America, even New York, are provincial in this sense: everyone is interested in what the others do. It is not Paris, still less London.

Thanks to that indefatigable meddler, the American reporter, who thrusts his nose everywhere, the slightest incidents of private life are made public, and commented upon right and left immediately. You need only live a couple of months in one of the large American cities, no matter which, in order to know everyone, and all their doings.

The mind of the Americans is always on the alert. They enter into everything, everything interests them, and there is always some fresh subject for conversation. If it is not a social event, or a literary or political one, it is a little scandal, a new religious sect, a new spiritualistic imposture—faith-healing, mind-cure;* conversation never dies for want of subjects. Exclaim that it is eccentricity if you like, and you will not be far wrong; but add that it is life, and you will be right. It is an existence more interesting than French life in the provinces, as the French poet has described it:—

> "You waken, rise, and dress, go out to see the town;
> Come home to dine or sup, and then to sleep lie down."

The Americans, and that in every station of life, have almost always three names: one Christian name and two family ones: George Washington Smith, Benjamin Franklin Jones, William Tell Brown. I should not have been astonished to make the acquaint-

* This new craze was upon every tongue at the beginning of the year. I was assured that, "being ill, you have only to determine with all your soul that you will get well, and you are forthwith restored to health." Mind is universal: you are part of the universal mind, and nothing can really ail you. So runs the jargon of the sect.

ance of a Mr. Napoleon Bonaparte Robinson. The celebrities do not escape it any more than the rest: Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, John Greenleaf Whittier, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Richard Watson Gilder, James Russell Lowell, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Ward Beecher, etc., etc. Can one not see in these double names a title which the father thinks he confers on his child at the baptismal font?

All new societies have the same weaknesses. On the morrow of the Great Revolution, did we not call our children Epaminondas, Leonidas, Darius, Napoleon, etc.?

Every American, with the least self-respect, is colonel or judge. Few escape it, as Mark Twain once remarked of the decoration of the Legion of Honour. We are quits, Mark. America has a hundred times as many colonels as we have knights of the Legion of Honour.

When you are presented to a gentleman in an American drawing-room, and you have unfortunately not caught his name, there is no need to try and repair the evil; call him "Colonel," nine times out of ten it is safe; if luck should be against you, call him "Judge," and you are pretty sure to be right.

If, however, pursued by the Fates, you should discover that your interlocutor is neither colonel nor judge, you have yet another resource—call him "Professor," and you are out of your difficulty: an

American always professes something, an art, a religion, a science, and you are risking nothing.

I met a few American Colonels who had recently been promoted *misters*. They were so proud of their new title that they insisted on being addressed thus.

American hospitality deserves the reputation which it enjoys in Europe. If it errs, it is perhaps on the side of prodigality. But how criticise hosts so amiable and so cordial?

American hospitality is princely. You are not often invited, even in houses where the daily *menu* is of the most appetising, to go and share the family dinner. You are not invited to dine—a *fête* is got up for you. If this cannot be managed, you are seldom invited at all.

You generally find you have been asked to a banquet: oysters, soup, *hors d'œuvre*, fish, *relevés*, *entrées*, sorbets, roasts, stew of terrapin, game (raw canvas-back duck, when in season), salads—five or six vegetables, pastry, sweets, cheese, ices and dessert, the whole washed down with the choicest wines, Château-Yquem, Amontillado, iced champagne, Château-Lafitte, and such precious beverages.

In good American houses the cooking is excellent; you will not find better in London and Paris.

The most *recherché* of American dishes is terrapin stew: when in season, it figures at every feast. The flavour is so pronounced that one is bound to think it either delicious or detestable.

Am I obliged to tell you which I think it?

An American asked me one day whether I liked terrapin.

I replied: "It is nothing but polite to bow to the customs of a country one visits. Terrapin is eaten in the United States, and I eat it."

Canvas-back duck is a great delicacy. It is hung in front of a fire for a few minutes only. The first time this purple meat is presented to you, it horrifies you; but I advise you to try and surmount your repugnance—the dish is exquisite.

In France, the English have the reputation of liking all kinds of meat very much undercooked. It is only one of the thousand absurd stories told about them. They prefer their meat very much cooked, on the contrary.

One of the many jokes on the subject of canvas-back duck which I heard was this:

One of these birds having been served to an Englishman, he, after a glance at it, called the waiter and said to him:

"Pass through the kitchen with it once more, please."

## CHAPTER X.

*Millionaires.—A List of the Great American Fortunes.—The Stock Exchange.—A Billionaire's House.—Benevolent Acts.—A Democracy Ruled by many Kings.*

I AM afraid it will make my readers' lips water, but here is a list of some American fortunes, as I have heard them stated:—

| Name. | Capital. | Revenue at 5 %. |
|---|---|---|
| J. Gould ... | £55,000,000 ... | £2,750,000 |
| J. W. Mackay... | 50,000,000 ... | 2,500,000 |
| C. Vanderbilt ... | 25,000,000 ... | 1,250,000 |
| J. P. Jones ... | 20,000,000 ... | 1,000,000 |
| J. J. Astor ... | 18,000,000 ... | 900,000 |
| W. Stewart ... | 8,000,000 ... | 400,000 |
| G. Bennett ... | 6,000,000 ... | 300,000 |

These are the princes of the Land of the Dollar. The largest English fortunes fall short of these figures. The Duke of Westminster's is reckoned at only £16,000,000; that of the Duke of Sutherland at £6,000,000; the Duke of Northumberland has £5,000,000; and the Marquis of Bute £4,000,000.

It is in mines and railways especially that the colossal fortunes have been made.

In France, with their fortunes translated into francs, Messrs. Jay Gould and J. W. Mackay would be billionaires; it takes a larger word than millionaire to give an idea of the opulence of these men, and I

beg to suggest to the editors of French dictionaries the addition of the word,

"MILLIARDAIRE, or BILLIONAIRE—a person possessing at least a *milliard*. This phenomenon is found in America."

Needless to say that, with his millions on millions, Mr. Jay Gould is a power. I was told in America that this man went to New York with only a few dollars in his pocket, and for some time earned a living by selling mousetraps. He now holds the American Stock Exchange in the hollow of his hand; instead of mice, he goes for *bulls* and *bears*, and stocks rise and fall at his whim. Other speculators are glad to pick up the crumbs that fall from his fingers. As for contending with him, as well try to break the bank at Monte Carlo with a sixpenny-piece.

I have not seen the town house or the country house of Mr. Gould; but I know that in the grounds of the latter stand conservatories estimated to be worth £50,000. I trust this will give an idea of what the rest may be. In these jottings, taken by the way, I can scarcely do more than put the reader on the track of that which can be seen in America.

I cannot guarantee that Mr. Gould is a happy man. Concerning immense fortunes, a witty American friend, rich in moderation and a great philosopher, said to me one day:

"No man can own more than a million dollars. When his bank account outgrows that, he does not own it; it owns him, and he becomes its slave."

The two kings of American plutocracy are Messrs. Vanderbilt and Astor. The name of king applies to them less on account of the size of their fortune than the generous use they make of it. They have founded hospitals, museums, and libraries, and are known for the generosity with which they respond to appeals for help in philanthropical causes. Shortly before my arrival in America, Mr. Vanderbilt had given 500,000 dollars to found a hospital in New York. Mrs. Astor had just given 225,000 dollars towards the funds of the Cancer Hospital.

The Vanderbilt mansion, in Fifth Avenue, New York, is a princely habitation. One might fill a volume in giving a complete description of the treasures that are crowded into it. The luxury on all sides is extreme. In the bath-room, I am told, the walls are all mirrors painted thickly with trails of morning glories, so that the bather seems to be in a bower of flowers. In plate and pictures, several million dollars must have been spent. The pictures hang in two spacious, well-lighted rooms. They number one hundred and seventy-four works, from the brushes of great modern masters, including the "Sower" and seven other masterpieces of Jean François Millett, three Rosa Bonheurs, seven Meissoniers, Turners, Géromes, the "Bataille de Rezonville" by Detaille, seven pictures by Theodore Rousseau, and beautiful examples of Alma Tadema, Sir F. Leighton, John Linnell, Bouguereau, Corot, Doré, Bonnat, and Munkacsy. In the entrance-hall hangs a portrait of Vanderbilt I., founder of the dynasty.

The Americans, having no king in our sense of the word, make the most of those they have, Republicans though they be. To read the pedigrees, published in full every time a death occurs in one of these rich families, is highly entertaining. A Mrs. Astor died while I was in America, and, after the enumeration of her charms and virtues, which were many, came the list of John Jacobs from whom her husband had sprung. The Astors were all John Jacobs apparently, and were mentioned as John Jacob I., John Jacob II., John Jacob III. The line does not go back very far, John Jacob I. having gone to America as a poor emigrant early in this century, I believe, and laid the foundation of the present grandeur of his House by trading in furs.

It will not do to inquire too closely into the way in which some of America's millionaires have amassed wealth. Strange stories are told of men so grasping that they stopped at nothing, even to the ruining of their own sons. When I saw Mr. Bronson Howard's clever play, *The Henrietta*, in which he portrays a son so madly engrossed by the excitement of gambling on the Stock Exchange as to try and absorb even his father's millions, I thought the picture was over-drawn. Americans, however, told me that the case was historical, but with the characters reversed—which made it still more odious.

As for the colossal fortunes of railway kings, it is well known how thousands of small ones go to make them; how the rich man's palace is too often built with the stones of hundreds of ruined homes.

There is no other name than king used in speaking of the few rich financiers who hold the bulk of the railway stock in America. But they are not the only ones. There are oil kings, copper kings, silver kings, and I know not what other majesties in America; and when you see the power possessed by these, and the numberless Trusts, Combinations, and Pools—a power pressing often very sorely on the million—you wonder how the Americans, who found one King one too many, should submit so patiently to being governed by scores.

## CHAPTER XI.

*The American Girl.—Her Liberty.—Her Manners.—Respect for Woman.—Youthful Reminiscences.—Flirtation Perfected.—The "Boston."—Why the Young American Lady does not Object to the Society of Men.—European Coats of Arms Regilt and Redeemed from Pawn.—Americans of the Faubourg Saint Germain. — Lady Randolph Churchill.—Mating of May and December.—Stale Theme of American Plays.—An Angel.—The Tell-tale Collodion. — The Heroine of "L'Abbé Constantin." — What American Girls Admire in a Man.*

THE liberty enjoyed by American girls astonishes the English as much as the liberty of the English girl astonishes the French.

From the age of eighteen the American girl is allowed almost every liberty. She takes the others.

She can travel alone, and go to concerts and even to theatres, unattended by a *chaperone*.

She is supplied with pocket-money, which she spends at her own sweet will in bonbons, knick-knacks, and jewels. If there is none left for the milliner and dressmaker, Papa is coaxed to pay them. She visits and receives whom she pleases, or rather those who please her. She has her own circle of acquaintances. If, at a ball, she meet with a young man who takes her fancy—I do not say touches her heart—she says to him: "I am at home on such

a day: come and see me." Next day he may send her a ticket for the theatre, and be her escort for the evening. He may bring her flowers, offer her refreshments after the play, and take her home in a carriage. In America all this is the most natural thing in the world. This leads to no intimacy: for a few days later, it may happen that he meets the young lady at a ball, and she comes up to him and says: "I want to present you to a friend; do tell me your name, I quite forget it."

The American girl, who appears to us French so giddy, and even fast, seems to me to act according to the dictates of common sense. Tired of the old formula, "A lady cannot do that—it would be improper," she says; "I will do it; and if I choose to do it, it becomes proper." It is for woman herself to make the law on these matters. "Why should I not go to the theatre alone?" she says. "If your streets are impure, it is for you to cleanse them. Why should not I receive my ball-partners who please me? If one of them were to profit by my seeing him alone in the drawing-room to take a liberty with me, he would be an ill-bred fellow, and I should promptly have him shown out of the house; and certainly it is not for such as he that I should change my habits."

It is the respect that woman inspires in American men which allows the young girl to go about with such freedom, and to queen it all through the States. Jonathan might give more than one lesson on this subject to the men of the Old World, even to the

Frenchman, who, in the matter of politeness, lives a good deal on the reputation of his ancestors. Jonathan's respect for woman is disinterested, purely platonic. In France, this respect takes the form of a politeness which verges on gallantry, and is often not disinterested. A Frenchman will always stand back to let a lady pass; but he will profit by the occasion to take a good look at her. The American, in similar circumstance, will respectfully lower his eyes.

In trains, where the seats are constructed to hold two persons, you will see the American seek a place from one end of the train to the other before he will go and seat himself by the side of a young girl. He will only do so when there is no help for it. I have many times even noticed men standing up in the local trains, rather than run the risk of incommoding a young girl by sharing a seat with her. And I am not speaking now of gentlemen only, but of men belonging to the middle, if not lower, class—if the word "class" may be used in speaking of the Americans.

With what pleasure I remember the young American girls whom I occasionally met at Parisian parties in my youthful days. Their pretty bright faces, their elegance, their unconventional charm of manner, and animated, natural conversation—all these enchanted me. One never felt awkward with them. Whereas, with a young French girl, I could generally find nothing but absurd commonplaces to say, in the presence of Jonathan's merry maidens I lost my

timidity, and could chat away with as little embarrassment as I would with a young brother-officer of my regiment.

The American girl is still without rivals in Parisian drawing-rooms, where she is more and more sought after. Men seek her for her gaiety, wit, or beauty; mothers look favourably upon her for her dollars. The younger women tear her to shreds; nothing is wanting to her success.

It was to her that Paris owed the introduction of that attractive dance, the "Boston." An inspiration, this dance!

Someone, I forget whom, has remarked of the waltz: "It is charming, it is fascinating; but one cannot chat." With the "Boston" it is different: one can dance that, and chat, and flirt too. Now a flirtation with an American girl is immensely agreeable, on account of the perfection which she brings to the art. To be gallant is no longer sufficient; to say things that are pretty, but insipid and commonplace, will not do at all; you must surpass yourself in wit and amiability, while keeping well within the bounds of the strictest propriety.

The "Boston" lends itself admirably to this charming amusement. It is voluptuously slow; a go-as-you-please dance, offering the added charm of a delightful *tête-à-tête*, when your partner is a bright and pretty girl.

I also used to get a great deal of diversion in looking at the American girls clearing the buffet.

How they would fall-to! How they made the ices disappear, and tossed off punch, champagne, or anything that came to their pretty little hands! With what disdain they passed over the syrups and *eau sucrée* that the French girls timidly sipped, looking all the while to see whether Mamma was not staring round-eyed to show that she disapproved of such dissipation. They must have something serious and satisfying.

"A little more champagne, mademoiselle?"

"Yes, please."

"Another of these little cakes?"

"Yes, please."

Only the musicians, as they struck up the first bars of the next dance, had fascination enough to draw them away from the refreshment-room.

And what spirit there was in their dancing! What animation! What eyes lit up with pleasure! Not a moment's flagging: they danced with as much suppleness at five in the morning as at the beginning of the evening. And why not, indeed? Such pleasures are harmless; and it is not because a woman has danced much in her girlhood that she should lead her husband a dance, when she has one.

Good scholars are as easy to discover in the recreation-ground as in the class-room. The morality of a youth is in direct proportion to the delight he takes in play; that of a girl may be measured by her gaiety and high spirits.

I shall never forget a young American girl who sat at the same table as myself on board the steamer. The dear child, who was about seventeen, performed prodigies. I could scarcely believe my eyes, and watched her with never-flagging interest. What appetite! What a little *table d'hôte* ogress! I trembled for our supplies, and wondered whether the Company had foreseen the danger.

First of all, at seven in the morning, tea and bread-and-butter was taken to the hungry one in her cabin. At half-past eight, she breakfasted. At this meal she generally went straight through the bill of fare. At eleven, she had beef-tea and biscuits brought to her on deck. Lunch-time found her ready for three courses of solid food, besides pastry, fruit, etc. At five, she had tea. At six o'clock, she did valiantly again; and at ten, she was regularly served with a welsh rabbit, or some other tasty trifle. Notwithstanding this, I rarely met her on deck, or in the corridors, but she was munching sweets, gingerbread, or chocolate.

After all, there are so few distractions on board ship! Men smoke, and perhaps play poker. Some people sleep, some try to think, but unsuccessfully, others read; some ladies knit. The American girl eats.

The American girl likes men's society for several reasons. First, because she is well-educated and able to talk on almost all topics. She can talk knick-knacks and pretty nonsense; but if she knows

how to describe the "cunningest bonnet" lately invented in Paris, she can also tell you all about Octave Feuillet's latest novel, or even Herbert Spencer's latest work. She likes men's society because it enlarges her circle of acquaintances, and also because it increases her chances of making a good match. No matter how much of a butterfly she may be, she never loses sight of the future. She does not say, as she sits musing on marriage, "What kind of man shall I suit?" but, "What kind of man shall I choose?"

The society of men has all the less danger for her that her virtue rests on a firm basis of calculation. She will not embark in the romance until she sees her way to profit—and profits—thereby. Fortune, or a title, that is her aim. She keeps it in view, even in the most *touching* moments. Between two kisses, she will perhaps ask her lover: "Are you rich?" It is the pinch of rhubarb between two layers of jam.

The constant aspiration of these young Republicans is to be one day countess, marchioness, or duchess.

The number of European coats-of-arms which have been taken out of pawn, or regilt, with American dollars is enormous.

Not long ago a writer on the staff of the Paris *Figaro* counted, among the guests in one of the most select drawing-rooms of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, thirty-seven American ladies, bearing thirty-seven names of the most authentic French nobility. To name only those which are present at the moment in

my memory: the Princess Murat, mother of the Duchesse de Mouchy, is American; the Marquise de Chasseloup-Laubat is American; the Comtesse de Saint-Ronan; *la Générale* de Charette, the Comtesse de Chevigné, and the Comtesse de Ganay are Americans. The daughters of the Great Democracy have become not only French in heart, but as Royalist as the most ultramontane of our old dowagers.

Everyone knows how many American women the English aristocracy counts in its bosom, and that that Tory and most powerful political association, called the Primrose League, originated with Lady Randolph Churchill, the young and handsome daughter of Mr. Jerome, of New York.

How many noble *chevaliers d'industrie* have exploited the American market, and at a bound become accepted suitors by some of Jonathan's daughters! It is known that Pranzini was in correspondence with the daughter of a wealthy New York banker, to whom he would probably be married now under the title of Count (I forget *whom*), had not the cuffs which he left behind in poor Marie Regnault's room put the police on his track.

That passion for rich marriages, which burns in the heart of so many young American women, often leads to disastrous results.

If one may trust one's eyes, American law allows young girls to marry their grandfathers, or at least the contemporaries of those worthies.

It is not rare, I may say it is quite common, to see girls of eighteen and twenty married to men of seventy and over.

As a Frenchman, I know it scarcely becomes me to throw the first stone at my neighbour for this: France is admittedly a country where *mariages de convenance* are common. Still, I must say the difference is enormous. In France, it is the parents who are to blame, and not the girls. They try to secure for their daughters what they are pleased to call a position; whilst, in America, it is the young girl herself who chooses her husband: she alone is responsible for this crime against Cupid's laws. She has not, either, the French girl's excuse—ignorance of the world; she knows better what awaits her on leaving the church. A French girl sometimes passes straight from the convent to the marriage altar, without her consent having been asked, or even her opinion consulted. And, again, I must add that if French parents often cause a girl of twenty to marry a man twice her age, they would shudder at the idea of giving her into the arms of an old man.

The young American, indulged and petted by her father, counts that an old husband will be more likely to put up with her caprices, and gratify all her whims, than a young man whose fortune was not made. "A young husband," she says to herself, "is all very fine; but there is my father, who does just what I please; I am pretty, and have hosts of men to tell me so every day; I am free to go where I like and receive whom I like; I spend as much as

I like: shall I exchange all this for a husband, who will hamper me with a household and perhaps a large family; who will talk of stocks, and perhaps preach economy; who will bore me with the prices of grain or cotton-seed oil, and give me the headache with listening to his politics and heaven knows what? No, no; I will take a husband who will think of nothing but satisfying my caprices." Perhaps she adds, in her wisdom: "A man of seventy or eighty I shall not have to put up with very long."

This kind of marriage is the well-worn theme of many American comedies. A woman is married to an old man or a rich matter-of-fact merchant. A young lover of former days, who at the time of the wedding was travelling abroad, appears upon the scene, and is thrown in contact with the young wife. He reproaches her with her conduct, and reminds her of his love for her, which has never ceased to live in his heart. The husband is out of the way, occupied with business, wrapped up in money-making, and the fair one listens to the tender reproaches of him she loved, but dismissed in favour of a richer husband. The danger is menacing; it is a struggle between love and duty. Duty triumphs, of course; but the picture of American life remains none the less faithful.

An American told me that he once went a long journey in the same railway carriage with an infirm, hoary old man of eighty, who was accompanied by a girl of scarce more than twenty. This young woman

was strikingly beautiful. My American friend admitted to me that the sight of her lovely face had the effect of making him fall quite in love with her before their five days' journey was over. He did not have an opportunity of conversing with her; but on arriving at their destination, he resolved to put up at the same hotel as the old man, so as to perhaps have a chance of making more ample acquaintance with his fair charge. To find out the name of the young girl and her venerable grandfather, he waited to sign his name in the hotel register until the patriarch had inscribed his own. Imagine his feelings when he read:

"Mr. X. and wife."

Here is a joke that I culled from a Washington paper. Is it a joke?

"A bachelor lately advertised for a wife. A typographical error changed his age from 37 to 87; but it made no difference, for he received over 250 applications, from ladies ranging in age from 16 to 60, and all promising love and devotion to the rest of his existence."

Here is another, which I extract from a comic paper. The author seems to believe that the American mother does not look on such marriages with displeasure:

"*Mother.*—'So you have engaged yourself to Mr. Jones. You must be a goose. He has neither fortune nor position. I know he may one day be well off; his grandfather may leave him part of his fortune, perhaps.'

"*Daughter.*—'But, mamma, it is his grandfather I am engaged to.'

"*Mother.*—'Kiss me, my child; you are an angel!'"

Whatever may be said on the subject, these marriages—I was going to say these prostitutions—are but the exception; but the exception is too frequent to be possible to pass it by in silence.

The American girl is past-mistress in the art of turning to account her little capital of beauty, youth, and virtue. To bring about the realisation of a dream, she knows how to employ all love's artillery, and if the object of her desire is recalcitrant, she can fire red-hot balls.

The late Alfred Assollant told how an American girl succeeded in making a young English lord marry her. In certain States of the Union it is sufficient to pass the night with a woman to be declared her husband by the law in the morning. This damsel, it appears, invited the young lord to sup in her own room. This is done, or was done, in certain parts of America, and morals were perhaps none the worse for it. The bait took, and at supper the scion of a lordly house got tipsy and went to sleep in the maiden's room, all ignorant of the law.

At daybreak there is a knocking at the door. *Tableau!* The fair one, all tearful and dishevelled, unbolts it, and ushers in the minister, who comes followed by the girl's parents and two witnesses, who are in the plot. The young lord in vain pro-

tests his innocence; he is married then and there, and the damsel only consents to his departure after having been bribed by a sum of a hundred thousand dollars.

Here is another story of the same stamp, which I heard told in America. It is not more authentic than Alfred Assollant's, but that which is very certain is that such an anecdote could not originate outside America. There are two kinds of truth: the truth that is true and the truth that might be true; in other words, there is truth to fact as well as truth to fiction.

This is the story, just as it was told:

An American girl adored a rich, handsome young fellow, who unhappily did not respond to her flame. One fine day a luminous idea occurs to her. She pretends to be ill, and sends to the young man to say she would like to see him. He hurries to the home of the fair invalid, who receives him lying on a sofa. She avows her love, and begs him to give her one kiss and bid her a long adieu. The swain bends over the sofa. The young lady encircles his neck with her arms, draws his head down, and imprints a long, lingering kiss on his lips. During this time, a photographer, hidden behind the hangings of the room, had his camera turned on the young couple. Next day the cunning lass sent her unconscious dupe a negative of the touching little scene of the day before, asking how many copies she should get printed. In face of the betraying collodion, and to save his honour, the youth saw that there was but

one thing to be done, and that was to walk to the altar, which he did without a murmur.

So much for caricature, or, if you prefer it, for the truth that is not true.

To return to strict verity, it is perfectly certain that an American girl does not fear to let a man understand that she loves him, and that, if need be, she lets no false modesty prevent her from telling him so. Bettina, in "L'Abbé Constantin," divines that Jean Reynaud loves her, but that he is scrupulous about avowing it, and, in order to avoid her, asks to be sent to join another garrison. She comes to him frankly. She knows that Jean will not make the advances, and she does it instead. The scene is as true to American life as it is pretty. It is the faithful portrait of an American girl, a perfect photograph: one of those artistic photographs that M. Ludovic Halévy is so clever at.

The real American girl admires male qualities in man. The perfumed dandy, dressed in the latest fashion—the *dude*, as he is called in the States—is not her admiration; she prefers a little roughness to too much polish. At a large reception, given at the New York Union League Club in the early part of the year, I asked a young lady who were ten or a dozen young men who did not miss a single dance.

"Oh," she replied, with an air of sovereign contempt, "a few young *dudes*, who have been invited by the club just to keep up the dancing: marionettes, you know."

## CHAPTER XII.

*The Emancipation of Woman.—Extinction of Man.—War against Beards.—Ladies Purifying the Streets of New York.—The Ladies "Go it" Alone, and have a "Good Time."*

IN a country where woman is a spoilt child, petted, and made so much of, who can do and dare almost anything, it is strange to find women who are not content with their lot, but demand the complete emancipation of their sex.

American women asking for complete emancipation! It makes one smile.

I was talking one evening with Mrs. Devereux Blake, the chief of the movement. (She is a lady middle-aged, well-preserved, of a fluent, agreeable conversation, who has declared war to the knife against the tyrant Man.)

"You must excuse me," I said to her, "if I ask questions; I am anxious to learn. I have submitted so many times to the interviewing process in your country, that I feel as if I had a right to interview the Americans a little in my turn. The American woman appears to me ungrateful not to be satisfied with her lot. She seems to rule the roast in the United States."

"No," replied Mrs. Blake, "she does not; but she ought."

"But she certainly does," I insisted.

"*De facto*, yes; but *de jure*, no."

"What do you want more?"

"The right to make laws."

"What do you mean by that?"

"The right of voting for candidates for Congress, and even the right to a seat in the House of Representatives."

"This appears to me a little too exacting, and almost unfair," I observed timidly. "You probably already make your husbands vote as you please: if, added to this, you are going to throw your own votes into the electoral urn, it means the extinction of man, neither more nor less; and, as Léon Gozlan said, 'it is perhaps as well that there should be two sexes, for some time longer at all events.' My dear lady, you are spoilt children, and spoilt children are never satisfied."

I felt a little out of place in this energetic lady's drawing-room, almost like a wolf in the fold. Nevertheless, I learned very interesting things that evening.

A lady, who enjoyed that most esteemed of woman's rights, the right to be pretty, gave me some very curious details on the subject of New York life. We were speaking of the security of women in the large towns, and of the risk they ran in going out alone after nightfall.

"I have been struck with the respectability of your American streets," I said to her. "One never sees vice flaunting by daylight; and, in the evening,

whenever I have been through the great arteries of your city, I have never seen anything that could shock the eyes of an honest woman. In Paris, the boulevards are infested with harlots from eight o'clock in the evening; and the evil is much worse in London, where from four or five in the afternoon a whole district is given over to them."

"You are right," said the lady; "but if the streets of New York are respectable, it is thanks to us. If we had waited until the men swept our pavements, we should have had to wait a long time. We cleaned them ourselves."

"What do you mean?"

"A few years ago, several young women, among whom I might name members of our best society, resolved upon going out alone in the evenings, and of striking the first man who dared to accost them. They persevered for a long while, and finally succeeded in accomplishing the disinfection of the main streets. Vice still exists; but it keeps within doors, and hides instead of parading itself. If you are able to go out at night with your wife, or even your young daughters; if a lady can go to the theatre alone, and, if it please her, return home on foot, it is to us that thanks are due. And do you not think that women, young, good-looking, and well-bred, who could master their disgust so far as to do that which the authorities were too cowardly to undertake, are not worthy to have a deliberative voice in the councils of the nation?"

I could not answer this.

Certainly, woman's influence upon public morality is most salutary, and ought to be given free play. I do not doubt that, if women occupied seats in all Town Councils, the streets would promptly be purified, and women would be able to go into the public thoroughfares at all hours as freely as their husbands and brothers.

I am going to launch a rather dangerous assertion.

It seems to me that the American woman does not render to man a hundredth part of the adoration he renders to her. If love could spring from gratitude, Jonathan would be the most beloved of men; but does it ever spring from such a source?

In the eyes of the American woman, man has his good points. He ensures her a good position when he marries her; he works hard to satisfy her smallest wishes; and so long as his signature has any value at the foot of a cheque, this will be an extenuating circumstance in his favour.

A young Baltimore lady told me one day that she often invited twenty or thirty girl friends to lunch with her. Not the shadow of a man at these parties. The same kind of entertainment is given by numbers of young ladies in Society in other cities. At these lunches there often are as many as forty or fifty of Brother Jonathan's fair daughters; and they, with

no other helps than their tongues and their teeth, spend three or four hours most merrily without the aid of man, and have a "real good time," as they call it.

There are numerous women's clubs in the United States. These sanctuaries are never profaned by the presence of man. The very postman and tradesmen only approach it with bated breath.

The members have their library, drawing-room, dining-room, boudoirs, bedrooms. They make music, read, write, chat, and pass time very agreeably.

One of the most important ladies' clubs is the Sorosis Club, of New York. Once a year the ladies of Sorosis give a banquet, to which gentlemen, as well as ladies, are invited. It was a source of sincere regret to me that my engagements in the South prevented me from accepting the kind invitation of the President to join that brilliant gathering at Delmonico's.

This spirit of independence in woman produces excellent results, it must be confessed. You find, in America, women who, by their talents, have won for themselves positions which numbers of men might envy. And do not imagine that I am speaking of blue-stockings, spectacled spinsters disdained of Cupid. Not at all. The American woman has always tact enough to remain womanly. Even among the heroines of the platform, I have always

noticed a little touch of coquetry, which proves to me that man is not in imminent danger of being suppressed in America.

Only a few days after I set foot in New York, a friend took me to visit the offices of the principal newspapers of the city. Passing along a corridor in *The World's* offices, I remarked a lady writing in one of the rooms. My friend led the way in, and presented me to her. I found her to be a pretty brunette of about twenty or twenty-two, delightfully *piquante*, and with most distinguished manners. I was struck with her simple bearing and her intelligent expression, and, on leaving the room, naturally wanted to know to whom I had had the pleasure of being introduced. I learned then that this young American girl did all the literary reviewing and gossip for the *New York World*, and took up as large a salary as a writer on the staff of the Paris *Figaro*.

The *St. Nicholas Magazine* is conducted by a lady.

Since her husband's death, Mrs. Frank Leslie has carried on, under her own management, the numerous magazines which issue from the house founded by that gentleman.

The largest newspapers, and all the principal Reviews, have ladies on their staffs.

Miss Mary Louise Booth, who directs the *Harper's Bazaar*, receives a salary of eight thousand dollars.

The two editors of *The Critic* are Miss Jeannette

Gilder and Mr. Joseph Gilder, sister and brother of Richard Watson Gilder, poet and chief editor of the *Century Magazine*, who himself has for colleagues Mr. Buel and a talented lady.

I might name many more.

The education of the women being, in America, very much the same as that of the men, ladies naturally may aspire to many employments which, in Europe, are looked upon as being the monopoly of man.

## CHAPTER XIII.

*Prudery.—"Shocking" Expressions.—Transformation of the Vocabulary.—War on Nudities.—The Venus of Milo does not escape the Wrath of the Puritans.—Mr. Anthony Comstock in Chief Command.—New England Prudes.—Tattling or Calumny?*

THE New England descendants of the Puritans have inherited a more than British prudery.

Charles Dickens speaks, in his *American Notes*, of people who covered the nakedness of their piano legs with little ornamental frills.

There still exist worthy creatures who would think it indecent to speak of such and such a star as being visible to the naked eye.

The word "leg" is improper; you must say "lower limb." Trousers have become "lower garments." Instead of going to bed, people "retire"; so that the bedroom becomes "retiring-room."

A lady having said, not long ago, in a Philadelphian drawing-room, that she felt shivers down her back, created a veritable panic among the hostess's guests.

I read the following piece of information in a New York paper among the news from a certain New England city:

"The authorities have begun a crusade against

the nude in art. One of the wealthiest gentlemen in the city will be proceeded against for keeping in his house copies of the Venus de Milo, the Venus de Medici, Canova's Venus, Power's Greek Slave, the Laocoon, and other works."

During my stay in New York, I was constantly hearing of a certain Mr. Anthony Comstock, who had attained celebrity by a campaign he had undertaken against nudities. Mr. Comstock visited the museums, galleries, exhibitions, and shops, and, whenever he found a bit of human flesh portrayed in paint or marble, he went before the magistrates and had a grand field-day. I must say, for the credit of the New Yorkers, that Mr. Comstock had earned for himself a reputation as grotesque as it was noisy. To take up such a line of censorship is, it seems to me, to publish one's own perversity; and the individual whose mind is so ill-formed that he cannot look at an artistic counterfeit presentment of the human form divine, without thinking evil thoughts, is to be pitied, if not despised.

But I suppose there will always be quack doctors with the cant of virtue on their lips, and vile and filthy imaginations in their hearts.

Be that as it may, the nude in art has been having a hard time of it lately.

Meanwhile, the Americans newspaper seemed to look upon Mr. Comstock as a legitimate target for their jokes and satire.

The New England ladies have the reputation of being the most easily-shocked women in the world. An American gentleman told me that a Philadelphia lady, at whose side he was seated one day at table, grew red to her very ears at his asking her which part of a chicken she preferred, the wing or the leg.

Are the New England women *Saintes—Nitouches?*

Baron Salvador says that he received from a correspondent the following information:

"There exists, in a certain New England city, a fashionable man-milliner, who has a room reserved ostensibly for fitting, but really for ladies who do not disdain to imbibe privately, through a straw, certain American drinks which they would not dare touch in public. In this dissimulated bar, under cover of silks and satins, they delight to chat on fashion and frivolities, while absorbing pretty tipples invented for their lords."

The prettiest part of the affair is, that the husbands pay for the beverages without knowing it.

On the bills, the milliner has added so much for trimmings (read: iced champagne), so much for lace (read: sherry-cobbler); and the duped husbands have nothing to complain of, except that the new fashions demand a great deal of trimming.

Is this tattle or calumny?

I am inclined myself to give very little credence to the story.

## CHAPTER XIV.

*John Bull's Cousin German.—A Salutary Lesson.—Women's Vengeance.—A Battle with Rotten Eggs.—An Unsavoury Omelette.—Tarring and Feathering.—Description of the Operation.—An Awkward Quarter-of-an-hour.—Vengeance of a Ladies' School.—A Town Council of Women.—Woman's Standing in the States.—Story of a Widow and her Two Daughters.*

JONATHAN is the cousin-german of John Bull, but yet not so German as one might imagine; for, if Germany supplies America with three or four hundred thousand immigrants yearly, these Germans do not Germanise America. On the contrary, they themselves become Americanised, thanks to that faculty of assimilation which they possess in a high degree.

One strong proof of this is the way in which women are treated from one end of the United States to the other. And here I may say that in this matter Jonathan sets John Bull an example which the latter would do well to profit by.

Whilst English justice gives merely one or two months' imprisonment to the man who is found guilty of having almost kicked his wife to death, an American town is in arms at the mere rumour of a man having maltreated a woman.

Here are a few scenes which I have come across in America:

Elmore Creel, an inhabitant of Greeve's Run, Wirt County, Virginia, had been known for some time to have subjected his wife and children to harsh treatment. The complaint became, at last, so general that an avenging mob took upon itself to chastise him. At midnight, Creel's house was surrounded. Creel was in bed. A squad of masked men broke into the house, and, overcoming his struggles, tied his hands, took him to the yard, and gave him a fearful thrashing with cowhides and hickory withes. After whipping him, they untied him and let him go, with the warning that another visit from them might be looked for if he was not kinder to his wife.

The following I extract from a Pittsburg paper:

George Burton, a well-to-do man of Ohio, one day turned his wife out of the house and left for Pittsburg. Next day he returned, bringing with him a dashing widow, named Fenton, whom he installed in his wife's place. When Mrs. Burton applied for admittance, she was sent away, her husband saying that he had someone else to care for him now. The news spread, and the female neighbours decided to avenge the wife's wrongs. After ten o'clock at night, three hundred women went to the house and beat the doors open. Burton and the dashing widow were dragged out, the man being chased several blocks, and pelted the while with rotten eggs. The widow was pounded and pummelled until the police

rescued her. She and the man were locked up in safe keeping. The neighbours then ransacked the house, and when they left it the place looked as if a cyclone had struck it. It was with great difficulty that the objectionable widow was conveyed to the train in safety by the police next day, and despatched to Trenton, New Jersey, where she came from.

Sometimes the chastisement takes a comic form. There are few distractions in the little western towns, and native humour finds an outlet in strange fashions. A man who illtreats his wife, or forsakes her for another woman, is often tarred and feathered. The operation is curious, and satisfies the vengeance of the populace, while procuring them an hour's amusement.

The delinquent is led, sometimes to the sound of music, to a retired spot. There he is stripped to the skin, and coated over with tar from head to foot. This done, he is rolled in feathers, which, of course, stick to him, and give him the appearance of a huge ugly duckling. To put a finishing touch to the operations, his clothes are carried off, and the mob wish him good luck.

This chastisement is sometimed applied to a woman whose conduct is known to be immoral. In such cases it is the women who operate on the culprit. They want their husbands and sons to be able to get about without danger, and they take upon themselves the task of keeping the moral atmosphere of the neighbourhood healthy. The idea appears primitive, but morality thrives by it.

If men may not tar and feather a woman, women occasionally give themselves the pleasure of tarring and feathering a man, which shows once more how privileged woman is in America. On the 12th of August, 1887, the editor of a paper in a little town in Illinois had to submit to this ignominious operation at the hands of about five hundred of his townswomen. His crime was that of having spoken cavalierly of the feminine morals of the township.

The following is from the *New York World:*

"A few days ago, an editor living in Hammond, Indiana, was horsewhipped by three schoolgirls, because he published articles about them which they called falsehoods. They also threw red pepper in his eyes, and this is a crime punishable by long sentence in this State; so that it is expected they will be indicted."

Youth is often indiscreet. Those girls ought to have stopped at the horsewhipping, and been happy.

The susceptibilities of American women are sometimes very easily wounded:

A paper having announced a man's death under the heading, "John K. gone to a better home," the widow brought an action for libel against the editor.

The women are not content with beating the men in the market-place, they beat them at elections as well. During my stay in the States, the town of Oskaloosa, in the State of Kansas, returned all the

women who put up as candidates for election to the Town Council. At the head of the poll was a Mrs. Lowman, who was proclaimed Mayor. It was said that for a year all the taverns and billiard-rooms of the town would be closed. When the result of the polling was known, the men pulled very long faces; but they finished by getting used to the idea of petticoat government, and in the evening they serenaded their Town Councilwomen.

The further west one goes, the more apparent becomes the power of the women; the further west one goes, the rarer does woman get. Is this the reason?

To every American hotel there is a ladies' entrance. This is to prevent contamination from the possible contact of man. When it rains or snows, an awning is thrown out over the pavement; but I daresay a permanent triumphal arch will ultimately be demanded by the ladies.

In the States of Kansas and Colorado, a woman on entering a railway train will touch a man on the shoulder, and say *almost* politely, "I like that seat; you take another."

I was riding one day in a Chicago tramcar. The seats were all occupied; but in America that does not mean that the car is full, and presently the conductor let in a woman, who came and stood near my seat. At the moment of her entry I had my head turned, and it might have been twenty or thirty seconds before I perceived that she was standing in front of me. Then I rose and offered her my place.

Do not imagine that she thanked me. She shot me a glance which clearly said, "Oh! you have made up your mind at last; you take your time over it." I need not say that she was not a lady; but, at any rate, she was well, even stylishly, dressed, and looked highly respectable. The American *lady* accepts graciously and gracefully the homage men render her; but the vulgar woman exacts it as her due, and does not feel bound to give any such small change of politeness as thanks or smiles. Women are everywhere more prone than men to act as *parvenues*.

The arrival of a woman in any little town of the Far West puts the male part of the population in revolution. "Whose wife will she become?" is the great question of the day, and all the eligible men of the neighbourhood enroll themselves in the list of her suitors.

Here is a little story, the authenticity of which is guaranteed by the *Dublin Mail:*

Idaho territory lies very far west indeed, and there is an alarming scarcity of women there. This has been curiously illustrated of late in the town of Waggon Wheel.

Recently two young ladies travelled to that remote region to attend to their dying brother. The poor fellow did not long require their services, and immediately after his death the sisters prepared to return home. Before, however, they could get away, nearly the whole population of the town—

headed by the Mayor and other high officials—were making matrimonial overtures to them. Feeling ran very high during five or six anxious days; and the Mayor's chances, despite his mature years, ruled the betting at six to one. At the end of the week both young ladies had capitulated, and were duly engaged. The Mayor was, however, cut out by a handsome young miner. The wedding-day was fixed, and the mother of the young ladies was summoned upon the scene. Here troubles began. She duly arrived, and was hotly indignant with her daughters for the scant respect which they had manifested towards their brother's memory by such indecent haste to wed. The girls explained that they had literally been besieged, and had yielded to the overwhelming force of circumstances. As usual, explanations increased the offence; and the mother vowed that neither of them should be married out there at all—that, in fact, the engagements were "off," and that they must be off too. The cup of felicity was thus rudely dashed from the lips of the two accepted men, and they made haste to tell their sorrows to the town. An indignation meeting was held, and the Mayor appointed a committee to wait upon the irate matron in order to ask her to reconsider her resolution. The Mayor, with rare magnanimity, considering the cruel blow his own hopes had just received, placed himself at the head of the deputation, and, in the name of patriotism, humbly implored the good lady to grant the petition, which he ardently urged. She, however, stood firmly

on her parental rights, and declared she would not leave the town without her daughters. Then the genius of the Mayor shone forth like the sun. He blandly proposed a compromise. Why need she leave at all? He drew her attention, of course in most delicate terms, to the fact that she was fair, plump, and fifty odd, and that similar language might be taken as descriptive of himself. There and then he offered her his hand and heart, and the young ladies a kind father and protector.

That settled the matter, and three marriages took place with a great flourish of trumpets at Waggon Wheel.

## CHAPTER XV.

*Dress.—My Light-Grey Trousers create a Sensation in a Pennsylvanian Town.—Women's Dress.—Style and Distinction.—Bonnets fit to Frighten a Choctaw.—Dress at the Theatre.—Ball Toilettes.—Draw a Veil over the Past, Ladies.—The Frogs and the Oxen.—Interest and Capital.—Dogs with Gold-filled Teeth.—Vulgarity.*

IN America, gentlemen's dress is plain, even severe: a high hat, black coat, dark trousers. Fancy cloth is little used, even in travelling.

I remember well the sensation I created with a pair of light-grey trousers in a small Pennsylvanian town. Everyone seemed to look at me as if I had been a strange animal; in the hotel the waitresses nudged one another, and scarcely repressed a giggle; and the street-urchins followed me as if I had been a member of the Sioux tribe in national costume. The day after my arrival, one of the local papers announced that "a Frenchman had landed in the town the day before in white trousers, and that his popularity had been as prompt as decisive."

With evening dress, the American gentleman wears no jewellery of any sort; even the watch-chain is generally invisible. Simplicity, rather severity, in dress is a mark of distinction in a man, and the American gentleman is no exception to the

rule. This simplicity in the dress of the men serves to throw up the brilliant attire of the women.

American ladies dress very well, as a rule; but there are a great number who cover themselves with furbelows and jewels, and, so long as each item is costly, trouble themselves little about the general effect. The tailor-made gown is worn in New York, as in Paris; but there is a proportion of women, even among the cultivated classes, who have the most sovereign contempt for all that is not silk, satin, or velvet. On board the *Germanic* we had two American ladies making the journey from Liverpool to New York in silk dresses, one a *moiré!* They were known to belong to good society.

Yes, in the large cities they dress well; but they lack the simplicity of style which the Princess of Wales has so happily inculcated in the Englishwomen who surround her. American women have plenty of style of their own, and have certainly also a great deal of distinction and grace; but they always look dressed for conquest. It is well to be it, but not well to show it. They are apt to laugh at the toilette of Englishwomen, and model their own dress more on French lines. For my part, I think that nothing can surpass a fresh young English girl in a cotton dress and simple straw hat.

The fashionable headgear, during my sojourn in the States, was a high, narrow construction, perched on the top of the head, and surmounted with feathers. At a certain distance it gave its wearer the look of an irate cockatoo. These monuments looked very

heavy and difficult to maintain in equilibrium, and the ladies wearing them walked like grenadiers in busbies. There are French milliners in New York, I believe. Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes pretends that they deteriorate on American soil. I remember we got upon this subject during a pleasant chat about his early days in Paris, and he said, "By the time a French milliner has been six months in New York, she will make a bonnet to frighten a Choctaw Indian."

At the theatre, women wear silk, which prevents one from hearing, and hats a foot high, which prevent one from seeing.

An American was once asked what a play—which he might have *seen*—was like. "Very much like the back of ladies' bonnets," he answered.

Boston ladies are an exception to the general rule. They are a great deal more English in style, eschew show and glitter, and wear diamonds very sparingly, even in the evening.

But the most striking contrast may be seen by going straight from New York or Chicago to Canada. "Here we are in England once more," I thought, as I looked at a bevy of Canadian girls disporting themselves at an afternoon dance in Montreal. Half-a-dozen New York women would have had on the worth of all the fifty or sixty toilettes in the room.

I fell to talking with a Canadian of the New York belles, their extravagant elegance, and their feverish love of society turmoil.

"Yes," said he, "they are very smart; with them it is paint and feathers, and *hooray!* all the time."

I was told that the Marchioness of Lorne, during her residence in Canada, had set the example of the greatest simplicity in dress.

American ball-toilettes are ravishing. Here the diamonds are in place. I do not know any gayer, more intoxicating sight than an American ballroom. The display of luxury is on a gigantic scale. The walls are covered with flowers, the rooms artistically lighted, the dancing animated, and the true spirit of gaiety everywhere visible. The young women are ideal in beauty and brilliancy; and if it were not for the atmosphere, which is hot enough to hatch silk-worms, you would pass the evening in an ecstacy of enjoyment.

Low-necked dresses are much worn by American women, not only at balls and dinners, but at their afternoon receptions. It seems very odd to us Europeans to see a lady in a low-necked ball-dress, at four in the afternoon, receiving her friends, who are habited in ordinary visiting toilettes or tailor-made gowns. I should not have said "ordinary," as there is nothing ordinary in America, especially in the way of women's dress. In France, a hostess seeks to make show of simplicity in her reception toilettes, so as to be likely to eclipse no one in her own house.

Low dresses are universal in America; old ladies vieing with young in the display of neck and shoul-

ders. It is true, the Americans are not peculiar in this. Many times, in a European ballroom, have I longed to exclaim:

"Ladies, throw a veil over the past, I pray you."

You may see some wonderful costumes in the streets of the large towns, disguises rather than dresses. The well-bred woman wears quiet colours on the street, but the other wears loud ones. I have seen dresses of an orange terra-cotta shade trimmed with huge bands of bright green velvet; costumes of violet plush worn with sky-blue hats, and other atrocities enough to make one's eyes cry for mercy. Violet and blue! Oh, Oscar Wilde! I thought you had been in America.

The wives of men with middle-class incomes imitate the luxury of the millionaire's wife. I expected to find it so: in a Democratic country the frogs all try to swell into oxen. They puff themselves out until they burst; or, rather, until their husbands burst.

In France always, and in England when he will let her, a wife keeps an eye on her husband's interests. In America, she often lays hands on his capital.

It must be said that vulgarity is not the monopoly of the middle-class woman in America. I extract the following from a Boston paper:

"The extreme of vulgarity has lately been attained in a gorgeous Soutnern hotel, where the wife

of a much-millionaired inventor holds state with a courier, another man-servant who dances attendance on a superannuated pug (whose teeth are said to be gold-fitted—the pug's teeth, remember, not the man's), and several maids. The courier manages the private palace-car of the family, which stands ready on the rails for use at any time and in any direction, and attends to the securing of rooms and steamer berths, as well as private dining privileges, when the family moves; and it always moves *en prince*."

All this is well enough if one can afford it; but the innate vulgarity of the thing is shown in fantastic and absurd costuming of the children, including satin breeches for the boys, and the gorgeous getting-up of the maids, two of these menials being told off to attend constantly on each child.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*High Class Humour.—Mr. Chauncey Depew and General Horace Porter.—Corneille had no Humour.—A Woman "sans père et sans proche."—Mark Twain.*

HUMOUR is an unassuming form of wit, by turns gay, naive, grim, and pathetic, that you will never come across in a vain, affected man.

What, for instance, could be more naive than the following remark I heard made by Mark Twain at a dinner in New York, one evening? It was given, of course, in his inimitable drawl:

"I was in the war too—for a fortnight—but I found I was on the strong side—so I retired—to make the fight even."

There is no country where you hear so many good anecdotes, and no country where they are so well told.

The Americans are delightful *raconteurs;* they are past-masters in the art of making those light, graceful, witty little speeches, which give to their dinners such a unique charm. Then the humour is delicate, the wit of the brightest. Irony and elegance combine to make these discourses veritable little literary gems. The Americans have their heads full of anecdotes and reminiscences; and it little matters in honour of

whom or of what the dinner is given, they are sure to be ready with anecdotes and reminiscences that are suitable to the occasion.

The chronicler who draws upon his fertile brain for an interesting column for his paper every day may choose his own subject, and the task, difficult as it is, is not insurmountable; but to be able, night after night, throughout a whole season, to make a witty speech on a given subject, not chosen by the speaker—this appears to me to be a wonderful feat. Nevertheless, it is done every year by a goodly number of Americans, foremost among whom must be named Mr. Chauncey Depew and General Horace Porter. A banquet is not complete without the presence of one of these delightful orators.

Here is a specimen of General Porter's drollery—a portrait of an old typical Puritan, given at a "New England" dinner.

"The old Puritan was not the most rollicking, the jolliest, the most playful of men. He at times amused himself sadly. He was given to a mild disregard of the conventionalities. He had suppressed bear-baiting, not, it is believed, because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the audience. He found the Indians were the proprietors of the land, and he felt himself constrained to move against them with his gun, with a view to increasing the number of absentee landlords. He found Indians on one side and witches on the other. He was surrounded with troubles. He had to keep the Indians under fire and the witches over it. These were some

of the things that reconciled that good man to sudden death. He never let the sun go down upon his wrath, but he, no doubt, often wished himself in that region near the Pole, where the sun does not go down for six months at a time, and gives wrath a fair chance to materialize. He was a thoughtful man. He spent his days inventing snow ploughs, and his evenings in sipping hot rum, and ruminating upon the probable strength of the future prohibition vote. Those were times when the wives remonstrated with their husbands regarding the unfortunate and disappointing results of too much drink, particularly when it led the men to go out and shoot at Indians—and miss them. These men generally began drinking on account of a bite of a snake, and usually had to quit on account of attacks from the same reptiles."

General Porter was good enough to introduce me to a New York audience on one occasion.

"Ladies and gentlemen," began the General, without relaxing a muscle of his face, "I claim your indulgence on behalf of the speaker who is going to address you; he has to speak in a language not his own, and, besides, he has not the resource of some of our countrymen, who, when their throats are tired, can speak through their noses."

Mr. Depew has not a very high opinion of English sense of humour.

This is an anecdote which he tells on the subject.

Mr. Depew and General Porter were present one evening at a dinner in London. The General had just terminated a speech, and Mr. Depew was called upon for one in his turn.

"Gentlemen," said he, rising, "I am in a great state of embarrassment. I had prepared a speech which General Porter, to my great surprise, has just given you word for word. The General and I occupied the same cabin on board the boat which brought us to England, and I strongly suspect he must have stolen my notes."

At this, it appears Mr. Depew heard an Englishman say to his neighbour:

"It is not the act of a gentleman."

I have sometimes heard it said that no man is really great who has no sense of humour and cannot see through a joke. If this is a rule, the French form an exception.

Corneille was one night looking on at a representation of Racine's "Plaideurs." When he heard the fine verse from the *Cid*, parodied, and applied by Racine to an old lawyer:

"*Les rides sur son front gravaient tous ses exploits*,"

it is said that Corneille exclaimed, in bourgeois style:

"I don't think people ought to be allowed to steal your verses like that."

American ladies run their husbands and fathers very close in the matter of wit. Their wit is apt to

be a little more sarcastic, perhaps. They are not women for nothing.

Some people were talking one day, in a New York drawing-room, of a lady who was making herself conspicuous in society, but of whom no one seemed to know the antecedents.

"Oh, don't speak to me of her," said one lady as witty as uncharitable; "she is *sans père et sans proche*."

Since the death of Artemus Ward, Mr. Samuel Clemens, whose pseudonym of "Mark Twain" is a household word among every English-speaking people, has held unchallenged the position of first American humorist.

Mark Twain is a man of about fifty years of age, thin, of medium height, and having well-marked features. His face, almost surly, is grave to severity, and rarely relaxes.

The profile is Jewish. The eyes, small and keen, are almost entirely hidden by thick bushy eyebrows; the well-shaped head is covered with thick bushy hair. A few yards off, Mark Twain's head looks like a crow's nest. The voice is drawling and has a decidedly nasal tone. When he slowly gets on his feet to speak, "tosses his frontlet to the sky," twists his head sidewise, frowning all the while, you little guess that in a few moments this man will convulse you with laughter.

Truly nothing could be more droll than Mark Twain's manner of telling an anecdote. His jokes, which he seems to twirl out from under his ears, make

straight for your sides, tickle them unmercifully, and set you twisting on your chair.

Mark Twain has amassed a considerable fortune, not—as he says himself—in writing his own books, but in publishing those of other people.* If there had been an international copyright between England and America, Mark Twain would have made a considerable fortune without going into business.

This writer excels specially in accounts of travels. He will not give you deep thoughts or serious information. He is a charming guide, who makes you see the comic side of the life he describes, who will pilot you wherever there is something for his keen observation to glean. His caricatures are so perfectly hit off that you recognise the original immediately.

This man of merriment is, it appears, also a deep student of serious things. His father was long anxious to have him write a life of Christ, and if he has never complied with his parent's wish, it is only from a feeling that a volume of the kind, coming from his pen, might not be read with the reverence such a subject demands.

Mark Twain inhabits a delightful cottage in Hartford, in the State of Connecticut.

* Mark Twain is the chief partner in the firm of Charles Webster and Co., New York.

## CHAPTER XVII.

*Boisterous Humour and Horseplay Wit.—A Dinner at the Clover Club of Philadelphia.—Other "Gridiron" Clubs.*

HUMOUR only springs in simple, unaffected characters. You find it in the well-bred Scotch. It overflows in the American, who is the prince of good fellows.

The Americans are so good at taking a joke, so good-tempered that, even in public, they enjoy to banter each other and serve as butts for each other's sarcasms: it is on these occasions that American humour is allowed free play. There are even "Gridiron Clubs"—clubs where guests are invited only to be put on the grill.

The most famous of these is the Clover Club at Philadelphia. Outside Paradise, there is no place where men are treated with so little regard to their rank. The members of the Clover Club are no respecters of persons. Nothing is sacred for them; age or position count for naught in their assemblies.

The club is composed of the principal journalists of Philadelphia. Once a year they ask to their table about fifty guests—people talked about; the President of the United States himself has an invitation, if he cares to submit himself to the "grilling" process.*

* Mr. Grover Cleveland has been through it.

The banquet is princely; the *menu* most *recherché*. But let us take a peep at the proceedings.

The president of the club, Mr. Handy, an American brimming over with wit, takes his place at the head of the table, and the feast begins. Choice dishes follow one another, and are washed down with choice wines. Conversation flows, and faces light up. An orchestra, placed in a neighbouring room, makes pleasant subdued music. The guests begin to think over the speeches they will soon be called upon to deliver—you recognise them by their white faces; the Cloverites quietly sharpen their weapons for the fray. Presently comes the dessert. The President strikes two or three little blows upon the table, and rises. Now for it! Now for the *quart d'heure de Rabelais!*

"Gentlemen," says the President," "I have the honour to propose the first toast of the evening. Let us fill our glasses, and drink to the honourable member of Congress on my right. I doubt not you will push your amiability and patience so far as to listen to his speech in respectful silence. He will be all the more proud to have an audience to-night, because, as we all know, when the honourable member gets up to make a speech at Washington, the benches begin to empty by magic. Gentlemen, give im a chance."

The Congressman takes the joke merrily, and thus commences his speech:

"Gentlemen—I mean *Members*—of the Clover Club."

The members pocket the satire with a hearty laugh.

Presently comes the turn of the second speaker. This one speaks in a scarcely audible voice.

"Raise your voice," cry the members.

"I am sorry you cannot hear. Come nearer."

The cries of "Louder!" continue.

"If I speak *low*," replies the orator, "it is in order to get down to your level."

This convulsed the assembly with laughter.

I was aghast.

Can it be possible, I thought, that they will stand that? The joke may be new and funny, but surely it is being carried beyond the bounds. If such things went on in France, one would see duels going on in all the retired spots of the neighbourhood next morning.

The health of a third guest is proposed in terms as grotesque as the preceding ones. This gentleman is an American, whose daughter is the wife of a member of the English aristocracy. By the manner in which he rises and begins to speak, it is easy to see that he is an old hand at this kind of tournament. He begins:

"Gentlemen, when I was present at your dinner last year——"

"Last year!" cries a Cloverite; "how did you get invited again this year, pray?"

"Oh, you know you can't do without me. You must have a few respectable people at your table. I mix with the aristocracy, gentlemen; but, as you

see, I am not at all proud: I come and sit at meat with you. It is not that I have the least esteem for you, but I will not have folks say that, because I move in the society of dukes, marquises, earls——"

"Shut up! what do we care for your dukes?"

"Bah! of course there is no blue blood in you; you can't appreciate the honour I am doing you."

The ironical laughter is deafening, but the speaker will not be baffled of his say.

"Before I came here, I made up my mind——"

"Your WHAT?"

"My mind."

"Ha, ha!"

Here the Cloverites stamp and shout, but the speaker braves out the storm. As a peroration, this is what he offers to his hosts:

"Gentlemen, I had prepared a speech, something refined, which you could scarcely be supposed to appreciate. I will not cast my pearls to—— ('All right, all right.') I will sit down. Perhaps next year I may find you a little more civilised."

"Next year! No danger of your being asked, my fine fellow!"

The President rises once more.

My turn has come.

Scarcely have I said the word "Gentlemen," when a volley of shouts and whistlings greets me.

I see that I am not going to be spared.

"Excuse me," I continued; "perhaps I had

better explain to you why I accepted your invitation. Since I am in America, I mean to study the customs and manners of the people. With this object in view, it would not do for me to confine myself to good society, and I have determined to make a beginning this evening——"

"That 's right," whispers my neighbour; "continue in that strain, and you will do."

For hours the speechifying goes on, mixed with music, recitations, songs, and anecdotes.

At two in the morning hosts and guests separate, declaring that they have had a real "good time."

The Clover Club is a first-rate leveller.

Any man, suffering from over-cultivated self-esteem, can be supplied by this club with wholesome physic.

There exist many other clubs of this kind, where the hospitality consists of getting amusement at the guests' expense. The idea is droll and naive. The Gridiron Club at Washington was founded on the same lines as the Clover Club in Philadelphia. During the evening on which I was present at the monthly dinner of the Gridiron, a member of the Chinese Embassy replied in Chinese to the toast that was proposed in his honour. I replied in French. It was a satisfaction to read in the Washington papers, next morning, that the Chinese and French speeches had been greatly appreciated by the club members.

Really? *Allons donc!*

Such fun as goes on at these "Gridiron" Clubs may savour a trifle of horseplay to the stranger; but though I do not know the origin of these tourneys, I imagine they arose from a genuine American enjoyment of quick repartee. At these meetings, eloquence prepared beforehand would be of little use: the essential equipment for the guest is a ready wit and a bold tongue.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

*Western and Eastern Wit.—Two Anecdotes in the way of Illustration.*

I THINK the two following anecdotes illustrate well the preposterousness of Western wit and the delicacy of the Eastern article.

To some Americans, who may read me, these two stories may be "chestnuts." To such I apologise.

A drunkard's relatives thought to frighten him into better ways. During a fit of intoxication he was laid in a coffin, and a friend remained near at hand, waiting until the drunken stupor should pass off.

By-and-bye, the occupant of the coffin awakes, sits up, and, rubbing his eyes,

"Where am I?" he inquires.

"You are dead," replies his friend, in a sepulchral kind of voice.

"Dear me! How long have I been dead?"

"Three days."

"And are you dead too?"

"Yes."

"And how long have you been dead?"

"Three weeks."

"Dear me! . . . then you have been dead

longer than I have. . . . tell me where I can get a drink."

Now a Bostonian anecdote.

Philadelphia, whether justly or not, has the reputation of being very dead-and-alive, and many are the jokes on its dullness. This is one, which illustrates well the keenness and delicacy of Eastern wit.

A Bostonian was doing the honours of his native city to a friend from Philadelphia. Having shown him all the points of interest in the place, he asked if he did not think Boston a fine city.

"Yes, it is very nice," said the Pennsylvania man; "but I don't think it is so well *laid out* as Philadelphia."

"No," rejoined the Bostonian, "but it will be, when it is as dead as Philadelphia."

## CHAPTER XIX.

*Journalism.—Prodigious Enterprises.—Startling Headlines.—"Jerked to Jesus."—"Mrs. Carter finds Fault with her Husband's Kisses."—Jacob's Ladder.—Sensational News.—How a Journalist became known.—Gossip.—The Murderer and the Reporters.—Detective Journalists.—"The Devil Dodged."—Ten Minutes' Stoppage in Purgatory.—French, English, and American Journalists.—A Visit to the Great Newspaper Offices.—Sunday Papers.—Country Papers.—Wonderful Eye-ticklers.—Polemics.—"Pulitzer and Dana."—Comic and Society Papers.—The "Detroit Free Press" and the "Omaha World."—American Reviews.*

BY his discovery of America, Christopher Columbus has furnished the Old World with an inexhaustible source of amusing novelties. You pass from the curious to the marvellous, from the marvellous to the incredible, from the incredible to the impossible realised.

But it is to American journalism that the palm must be awarded.

I shall speak later on of the Sunday papers—those phenomenal productions that fairly take your breath away.

Take the daily papers: eight, ten, sometimes twelve pages, each consisting of eight or nine columns of fine print, the whole for a penny or threehalfpence. So much for the quantity.

The first thing that attracts your attention is the titles of the articles. The smallest bit of news cannot escape your notice, thanks to these wonderful head-lines. It requires a special genius for the work, to be able to hit upon such eye-ticklers.

Here are a few that I noted down in New York, Chicago, and other large towns:—

The death of Mrs. Garfield, mother of the late President, was announced with the heading:

*Death of Grandma Garfield.*

The marriage of M. Maurice Bernhardt:

*Sarah's boy leads his bride to the altar.*

The execution of a criminal was announced by a Chicago paper under the heading:

*Jerked to Jesus.*

The reports of two divorce cases at Chicago were entitled respectively:

*Tired of William.*

*Mrs. Carter finds fault with her husband's kissing.*

An article on Prince Bismarck was headed in large letters: BISMARCK WITHDRAWS. Just underneath, in very small print, was: *His resignation as Chancellor of the German Empire.*

The marriage of young Earl Cairns, who had been betrothed several times, was announced to the American ladies thus:

*Garmoyle caught at last.*

Mr. Arthur Balfour, having refused to reply to some attacks of the Irish Nationalists, a prominent New York paper thus announced the fact:

*Balfour doesn't care a——*

During his late visit to America, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain was invited by the members of a New York club to a dinner given in his honour. At the eleventh hour the right honourable gentleman, being detained in Washington on State business, was obliged to send and excuse himself. Next day, I read in the *New York Herald:*

*One dinner less for Joe.*

While I was in the United States, the papers were constantly speaking of a financier named Jacob Sharp. Accused of fraudulent dealings, this gentleman had been arrested, but subsequently released, untried. The press indulged in much comment on the matter, and such remarks as: "All mortals have their trials except financiers."

One morning the newspapers were obliged to desist from their attacks: poor Jacob had passed away from earth.

The same day, I met the editor of one of the large daily papers.

"Well," said I, "here is a fine occasion for a grand head-line to-morrow; you are not going to let it slip, I suppose."

"What do you mean?"

"How can you ask? Why, *Jacob gone up the ladder!* of course."

"Splendid!" he exclaimed.

"*Pends-toi*, my dear editor, thou didst not find that one."

"I must have it. How much will you take for it?"

"I 'll make you a present of it," said I.

Next morning, the death of the financier was told in two columns, headed:

*Jacob gone up the ladder.*

If ever I wanted to apply for a journalistic post in America, this would be my most weighty recommendation in the eyes of my future chief.

I did not know what lively reading was until I saw an American newspaper.

American journalism is, above all, a sensational journalism. If the facts reported are exact, so much the better for the paper; if not, so much the worse for the facts. Beyond the date, few statements are reliable. But the papers are always lively reading. Picture to yourself a country where the papers are all *Pall Mall Gazettes*, with this difference, that the articles, instead of being always by "One who knows," are oftener by "One who doesn't."

To succeed as a journalist in America, it is not necessary to be a man of letters, to be able to write leading articles *à la* John Lemoinne; the only qualification necessary is to be able to amuse and interest the reader; this must be done at any cost; all styles are admissible except the heavy.

The accounts of trials in the police courts or at the courts of assize eclipse the novels of M. du Boisgobey. I, who never read tribunal reports in the English newspapers, was more than once surprised in America to find myself deeply interested in

the account of a trial for murder, following all the details of the case and unwilling to miss a word. Alternately moved and horrified, I would read to the end, then, passing my hand across my forehead, I would say to myself: "How silly; it is mostly fiction, after all!"

The American journalist must be spicy, lively, bright. He must know how to, not *report*, but *relate* an accident, a trial, a conflagration, and, at a push, make up an article of one or two columns in length upon the most insignificant incident. He must be interesting, *readable*, as the English call it with reason. His eyes and ears must be always open, every sense on the alert; for, before all and above all, he must keep ahead in this race for news; if he should once let himself be outdone by a *confrère*, his reputation would be blasted.

But you will perhaps exclaim: "What is the poor fellow to do when there is no news?" What is he to do? And his imagination, is it given him for no purpose? If he have no imagination, he had better give up the idea of being a journalist in America, as he will soon find out.

This is how one American reporter made a reputation at a bound. The Chicago people are still proud to tell the story.

The young fellow was taking a walk one evening in a retired part of the town, on the look-out for what adventure history does not say. All at once, a human form, lying motionless on the ground, attracted the sight of our hero. He drew near to it,

stooped down, and found it to be a corpse. His first impulse was to immediately seek a policeman and tell him of the discovery.

But a second idea came; it was more practical, and he adopted it. This was it:

His paper comes out at two in the afternoon, so that by running straight to the police station he would be making the matter public, and furnishing his brother reporters with a column or two for their morning papers. It is a catch, this corpse, and not to be lightly given away. What to do? Simply this. Our journalist drags the body into an empty building near at hand, and carefully hides it. At eleven next morning, he *discovers* it by chance, goes as fast as possible to make his declaration to the police, and then hastens away to the office of his newspaper with two columns of description written overnight. At two o'clock, the paper announces "Mysterious murder in Chicago: discovery of the victim by one of our reporters!"

The morning papers were outdone; the evening ones nowhere.

This is the kind of talent you must have in order to stand a chance of making your way in American journalism.

Crimes, divorces, elopements, mésalliances, gossip of all kinds, furnish the papers with three-quarters of their contents. A mysterious affair, skilfully handled, will make the fortune of a paper.

For several weeks, during the months of February and March, the American papers were talking about

a young lady of good family in Washington, who, it appeared, had become engaged to a young Indian named Chaska, a tawny brave of the Sioux tribe. There were descriptions of the wild man; descriptions of the festivities which were to be held in his honour at the camp of the great chief, Swift Bird; descriptions of the gorgeous ornaments with which the members of the tribe would be adorned—nothing was wanting: day after day fresh details were added. Then the despair of the young lady's family was pictured. The threats of an indignant father, the tears of a distressed mother, nothing, it seemed, could touch the heart of the fair one but the piercing eyes of Chaska.

At last the marriage takes place, not only in broad day, but in church. It is not Swift Bird who blesses the young couple; it is the parish clergyman. Romance gives place to verity; and, without the slightest sign of being disconcerted, the papers announce (in a few lines only this time) that the young lady has married a clerk in the *Indian Affairs Office.*

All this is as nothing. It is when there is a criminal case to handle that American journalism becomes simply sublime.

The criminal is no sooner arrested than the reporters hurry to his cell, and get him to undergo the curious operation now known throughout the world as *interviewing.* He is treated with all the consideration due to a man in his position. "Mr.

So and So, of the *Earthquake*, presents his compliments to Mr. Blank, charged with murder, and requests the favour of a few minutes' conversation." To be accused of an important crime gives a man a certain standing in America. The more atrocious the crime, the more interesting the accused; and columns upon columns of print supply the public with his slightest sayings and doings. He is the hero of the day. From the prison, the reporters go to hunt up the witnesses, whom they also interview in their turn. Regular examinations, these interviews!

If there is any love story mixed in with the affair, if there are a few piquant details, you may easily imagine that the public gets the worth of its penny.

The American is gallant, and when the victim is of the feminine gender, I can assure you the accused generally gets a pretty drubbing in the press.

American journalism carries the spirit of enterprise still further. Not content with trying criminals, it hunts them out and brings them to justice. Policeman, magistrate, public prosecutor, judge—the journalist is all these.

I know of several American newspapers having quite a staff of detectives—yes, detectives. If a criminal escapes justice, or an affair remains surrounded by mystery, these new-fashioned journalists are let loose every morning on a search for the criminal, or to try and pick up threads of information

that may lead to the clearing up of the mystery. These detectives are employed, not only in cases of crime, but work just as hard over a divorce or an elopement: it is journalism turned private detective agency. A newspaper that can boast of having brought a criminal to justice, discovered the hiding-place of an unfaithful wife, or run a ravisher to earth, is rewarded by an increased sale forthwith.

The slightest thing that can make the paper attractive is seized upon with avidity. The headings, which I have spoken of, are called into requisition on all occasions, and there is nothing, down to the mere announcements, that will not suggest to a wide-awake editor one of these wonderful eye-ticklers. Thus the Saturday list of preachers for the morrow is headed in the *New York Herald:*

*Salvation for all;* or *Guiding Sinners Heavenwards,* or *Dodging the Devil.*

In one paper, you will see the list of births, marriages, and deaths, headed respectively: *The Cradle, the Altar,* and *the Tomb;* in another, more facetious: *Hatches, Matches,* and *Dispatches.*

In a society paper, much given to gossip, I noticed the news of the fashionable world distributed under the following titles:

*Cradle* (list of births);

*Flirtations* (list of young people suspected of a tender passion for each other);

*Engagements* (promises of marriage);

*Tiffs* (sic);

*Ruptures;*

*Marriages;*
*Divorces and Separations;*
*Deaths.*

It was the whole comedy of life.

What a pity the American papers cannot have reporters in the other world to note the *entries into Paradise*, and *descents into Hell!*

*Ten minutes' stoppage in Purgatory* would be very crisp and effective.

Compared with the French and English papers, the American dailies have neither the literary value of the former nor the authority of the latter in the matter of political foreign news.

The French newspapers are most of them literary productions of incontestable worth; but, with the exception of one or two leading articles, and the literary, musical, and dramatic criticisms, nothing very serious in the way of information is to be found in them. The foreign intelligence is of the most meagre, and usually consists of a few lines furnished by *L'agence Havas:* "The Emperor of Germany is a little better," or "Queen Victoria has returned to Windsor from Scotland," etc.

Mr. George Augustus Sala once said very wittily that the French papers bear the date of to-morrow and the news of yesterday. The satire is a little severe, but it is not unmerited. He might, however, have taken that opportunity for reminding his numerous readers that, if the Parisian papers are inferior to the London ones in the matter of news,

they are greatly their superiors in the matter of articles. It is true we have no longer among our journalists Roqueplan, Karr, Méry, Janin, Prévost-Paradol, Girardin, Taine, About; but we have still John Lemoinne, Weiss, Sarcey, Rochefort, Wolff, Lockroy, Vacquerie, Scholl, Fouquier, Bergerat, and many others, who offer to the public every morning articles stamped with genius, or, at the least, sparkling with wit; yes, we have still a goodly group of such.

For the intelligent, serious man, the English daily papers have only the attraction of the correctness of their correspondence, home and foreign. It consists of facts in all their aridity, but still facts. As for the articles, few persons, I fancy, read those productions written, with few exceptions, in the dry, thready, pedagogic style much affected by lower-form schoolboys, and often deserving the favourite comment of the late M. Lemaire, professor at the Lycée Charlemagne: "*Lourd, pâteux, délayé dans le vide.*"

An American newspaper is a conglomeration of news, political, literary, artistic, scientific, and fashionable, of reports of trials, of amusing anecdotes, gossip of all kinds, interviews, jokes, scandal; the whole written in a style which sometimes shocks the man of taste, but which often interests, and always amuses.

A literary celebrity of Boston said to me one day: "I am ashamed of our American press; we have only two papers in the country that I do not

blush for, and those are the Boston *Post*, and the *Evening Post* of New York.

I must say that, if you want to hear America and everything American severely criticised, you have only to go to Boston. There you will hear Boston and England praised, and America picked to pieces.

"Are you an American?" I once asked of a gentleman I met in New York.

"Well," he said after some hesitation, "I'm from Boston."

Fancy! being born in Boston, and obliged to be an American! That's hard.

The American public is not composed merely of the refined scciety of Boston and New York, and the press is obliged to cater to the public taste. When the public taste is improved, the newspapers will reform, and everything leads to the belief that the amelioration will not be long coming.

As for political news sent over from Europe, one needs to allow a little margin on what one reads in the American papers; but it is impossible not to praise the activity which animates the press.

Thus, for instance, I was in New York on the day that M. Victorien Sardou brought out *La Tosca* at the Porte St. Martin. The first representation took place on a Saturday. The next morning, my newspaper gave me a most complete analytical description of the performance in two columns. That is to say, the Americans were able to read the details of Sarah Bernhardt's latest triumph earlier

than the inhabitants of Lyons or Marseilles, who had to wait for the Paris papers.

Thanks to their journalism, the Americans have at least an idea of what is going on in Europe: they know our new plays, they read our new books, they are kept informed of every event, just as if they were neighbours. And how is it possible, I repeat, not to say a good word for a journalism which knows how to excite, as well as satisfy, the curiosity of a great people?

Go and ask the first hundred Frenchmen you meet in the streets of Paris what is the name of the President of the United States, you will find ninety-nine of them unable to tell you. The Frenchman is exclusive to the point of stupidity, and that which is not French possesses no interest for him. Enveloped in this exclusiveness, he knows nothing: in the matter of foreign questions, he is the most ignorant being in the world; and French journalism, obliged to study his tastes, serves him with nothing but French dishes.

You must visit the offices of the great New York papers in the evening, if you would get an idea of these colossal enterprises. There you see about fifty reporters with their news all ready for print in their hands. Each one in turn passes before the heads of the various departments, political, literary, dramatic, etc.

"What have you?" asks an editor of the first reporter who presents himself.

"An interview with Sarah Bernhardt."

"Very good. Half a column. And what have you?" he says, turning to the second.

"A report of John Smith, the banker's case."

"Right. One column. And you?"

"I have an account of the President's forthcoming journey to the South."

When all the reporters have passed, they go to another room to reduce their articles to the required length. Over six hundred correspondents, scattered all over the globe, send in their telegrams* by special wire for the most part; and the conversation, which we have just overheard in the office, begins again, this time with Washington, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco, Paris, London, Berlin, &c.

"What have you for us this evening?" says the editor to his correspondent in Berlin.

"Bismarck threatens to send in his resignation."

"One column."

"Boulanger has just received an ovation at Lille. A riot is feared in Paris," wires the Paris correspondent.

"Capital! send two columns."

"A scandal in Rome. The Marchioness of N. has run away with her husband's secretary."

"Good. Where are they gone?"

"No one knows."

"No matter. Send a good stirring column all the same."

* I have seen, in American papers, European telegrams of 2,000 and even 3,000 words—at sixpence a word.

"What's-his-name, the financier, has made off," ticks the wire from Chicago.

"A column. Send report, and start on scent of the fugitive."

When the telegraph has ceased ticking, and the crowd of reporters have departed, the chief editor, like a ship's captain, the last to leave the deck, works on. He reads over everything—yes, everything; sifts, corrects, cuts down, adds to, puts all in order, and towards two o'clock in the morning gives the order to print, and goes home.

But once more all this is nothing. It is in the Sunday's issue that you have the crowning feat of journalistic enterprise: thirty or thirty-two pages of telegrams, articles, essays on politics, the drama, literature, pictures, the fashions, anecdotes, *bons mots*, interviews, stories for children, poetry, biographies, chats on science, the whole illustrated with portraits, sketches of interesting places mentioned in the text, caricatures, etc. All this for the sum of three halfpence.

And this is not all. How send these mammoth newspapers throughout the different States of the Union? How? Oh, that is very simple. The *New York World* and the *New York Herald* have special trains. Tell me if it is not enough to take one's breath away. But, you will ask, how can a paper publish such a number for three halfpence? From thirty to forty columns of advertisements, such is the solution of the mystery.

I admire several large papers, notably the *New York Herald*, which put their immense publicity at the disposition of lean purses. Persons in want of servants, for example, have to pay 25 cents a line for advertising; but male servants in search of a situation only pay 10 cents. a line, and women 5 cents. This is philanthropy of the right sort, chivalrous philanthropy.

In New York, the large daily papers which you see in the hands of everyone are: the *Tribune*, the *Times*, the *Herald*, the *World*, the *Sun*, and the *Star*.

The first two are those most read by the cultivated classes; the most popular are the two following.

Five or six important newspapers appear in the afternoon: the *Post* (the most respectable and respected of all American organs); the *Commercial Advertiser*, an excellent literary, political, and financial publication; the *Mail and Express*; the *Telegram*, the *Sun*, and the *World*.

Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago possess newspapers in no way second in importance to those of New York. Of such are the *Globe*, the *Post*, the *Advertiser*, the *Herald*, the *Transcript*, and the *Journal*, of Boston; the *Ledger* and the *Press*, of Philadelphia; the *Tribune*, the *Herald*, the *Inter-Ocean*, and the *Journal*, of Chicago. Washington, St. Louis, San Francisco, Cincinnati, Pittsburg, and many other towns, have also newspapers of the first importance.

Every little town of a thousand to fifteen hundred

inhabitants has its two newspapers, one democratic, the other republican. For lively reading, take up these papers during the electoral struggle which terminates with the installation of a new President at the White House. The names of some of them will suffice to give you an idea of the style of the contents: very favourite names are the *Paralyser*, the *Rustler*, the *Cyclone*, the *Prairie Dog*, the *Bazoo*, the *Lucifer*, the *Bundle of Sticks*, the *Thunderer*, the *Earthquake*. I saw and read a copy of the sheet which rejoiced in the name of *Bundle of Sticks*. The first article contained advice to a certain Joseph Müller, who, instead of working, had taken up street preaching and house-to-house prayer. "We give Joseph Müller a fortnight to find some honourable employment. If at the end of that time he is still leading an idle life, we will find an exalted position for him." The joke makes one shudder, when one thinks that, if Joseph should turn a deaf ear to the warning, he is quite sure to be hung by his townsmen to the highest branch of some tree in the town.

Manners will tone down in the West, as they have in the East, and in twenty years the *Thunderer* and the *Avalanche* will give place to the *Times* and the *Tribune*.

The characteristic of new societies is freedom of speech as well as of action. I read in some *Thunderer* the following lines about the editor of the *Lightning*, the other newspaper of the town: "We wish to use moderation, and to keep within the limits of good breeding. We will only go so far as to say that

personally he is a sneak; and that as a journalist he is a liar and a scoundrel." The *Lightning* replies in the same strain, and the public gets amusement for the moderate sum of one halfpenny.

Many of these papers of Kentucky, Texas, and other Western States may be paid for in kind. I extract the following from the *Herald*, of Hazel Green (Kentucky):—

"*NO EXCUSE FOR IGNORANCE.*

*How you may get the 'Herald' for a year without money.*

*Bring us:—*

*Twenty pounds of pork; or*
*Ten pounds of pork sausage; or*
*Two bushels of sound potatoes; or*
*Five bushels of sound turnips: or*
*Ten good chickens; or*
*One bushel of good onions.*

*For half the quantity, we will send the paper half the time.*"

And so the whole population of Hazel Green has the newspaper put within its reach.

The *Thunderer* and the *Lightning* are not the only papers that indulge in violent polemics, in which insulting personalities take the place of arguments.

During the whole time I was in America, Mr. Pulitzer, proprietor and manager of the *World*, and Mr. Dana, editor of the *Sun*, one of the most

accomplished American journalists, were day after day calling each other such names as "robber, liar, mortgaged, dirty Jew." I see by papers that my New York friends kindly send me from time to time, that these gentlemen have not yet exhausted their Billingsgate vocabulary.

Do not draw hasty conclusions from this. I do not know Mr. Pulitzer personally, but I have the pleasure of knowing Colonel Cockerill, chief editor of the *World*, and Mr. Charles Dana, of the *Sun*. In private life they are perfect gentlemen, and men of great talent. In public life they are in the swim —they go with the tide. As a study of English, the polemic of the *World* and the *Sun* was most interesting.

The American press was divided into two camps: the partisans of Pulitzer and the partisans of Dana. Whenever the combatants were driven up for want of fresh epithets of the requisite strength, their supporters suggested some to them. Here are some congratulations, addressed to Mr. Dana, which I read in the St. Louis *Globe*:

"It was from beginning to end the *Sun's* stiletto against the *World's* meat-axe, and, as is always the case, the meat-axe came out second best. The literature of invective contains nothing finer than some of the *Sun's* attacks on the *World*, and the literature of the gutter contains nothing more feeble than the *World's* defence. The *Sun* dealt out prussic acid by the drop, and the *World* replied with rough-on-rats by the pound. The flatulent anger of Pulitzer

was completely overwhelmed by the concentrated venom of Dana."

A *confrère* could scarcely be more amiable, and I hope Mr. Dana appreciated the compliments.

America, New York especially, has some capital comic papers.

By that, I mean more comic than the rest.

Similar to the Paris *Charivari* and to *Punch*, *Puck* and *Judge* have always skits on the questions of the day, touched off with the freedom which one would expect in free America. The manners of the people are criticised with wit and good taste. The little illustrations are charming, but two or three huge coloured pictures done in the crudest style disfigure each of these papers. Several other publications, such as *Life*, written in a light, sparkling style, and ornamented with little fine, tasteful illustrations, concern themselves with the sayings and doings of higher American society, Little stories, anecdotes, *bons mots*, material for a merry hour. Admirable are these papers, which know how to be comic, witty, and bright, without being objectionable, or unfit to put into the hands of a girl in her teens.

These papers are not only amusing to the stranger, they are instructive. The funny stories, the naive jokes, as descriptive as they are diverting, give a truer idea of American character and manners than many a ponderous volume.

As in France and England, the comic papers in America are the only ones which give proof of a little

wisdom or common sense when the horizon is darkened, and home and foreign political questions are disturbing the peace of the country.

If I were asked to name the most amusing papers published in the United States, I should not hesitate to award the palm to the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Omaha World;* in these two, American humour reveals itself in all its spontaneous gaiety, and their drolleries are reproduced from New York to San Francisco, from Montreal to New Orleans.

Space fails me here to do justice to the literary, dramatic, and artistic journals. Among the first, however, mention must be made of the *Critic*. Its analyses are amiable and discreetly erudite. Its criticisms are always fair, and never crabbed.

I cannot close this chapter without speaking of the American Reviews; they have attained a perfection which is the highest utterance of journalism, as understood by the educated world. But they are for the most part so well known in England that I need not enlarge upon the merit and charms of such publications as the *North American Review*, the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Forum*, the *Century*, the *Harper*, *Scribner*, *Lippincott*, and that treasure of English-reading children all over the world, the incomparable *St. Nicholas*. Besides all these, there are the

*Cosmopolitan*, the *America*, the *American Magazine*, and numbers of others.

Alas, it would need a score of volumes to do anything like justice to that which one can see in America. Unhappily, it would take a score of years to see it in. And so I alight but a moment at each turning, happy if, by trying to show the reader a little of everything, I succeed in showing him something.

## CHAPTER XX.

*Reporting.—For the American Reporter Nothing is Sacred.—Demolition of the Wall of Private Life.—Does your Husband Snore?—St. Anthony and the Reporters.—I am Interviewed.—My Manager drops Asleep over it.—The Interview in Print.—The President of the United States and the Reporters.—"I am the Interviewer."*

"JOURNALISM has killed literature, and reporting is killing journalism. It is the last gasp of the dying literature of an epoch; it is the man of letters replaced by the *concierge*." So exclaims M. Albert Millaud in one of his clever articles in the *Figaro*.

In America, reporting has simply overrun, swallowed up, journalism. It is a demolition of the wall of private life; the substitution of gossip for chronicle, of chatter for criticism.

For the interviewer, nothing is sacred. Audacity is his stock-in-trade: the most private details of your daily life are at his mercy; and unless you blow his brains out—which is not lawful in New York State—you have no means of getting rid of him.

Do not believe you have got over the difficulty by having him told that you are not at home. He will return to the charge ten, twenty times; he will stand sentinel at your door, sleep on the mat outside your hotel bedroom, so as to pounce on you as soon

as you show your face in the morning. He is patient; and if any indisposition should oblige you to keep your room, he will wait till you are well again, and will have his meals brought to him in the corridor. Should you succeed in escaping the hunter, rather than return to the newspaper-office empty-handed from the chase, he will find your wife, and ask her if you snore, whether you are an early riser, whether you are the more amiable after dinner or before, what you eat at breakfast, what is your favourite colour in trousers, and what size boots you take. He will ask her when you were married, how long your honeymoon lasted, if you have children, and whether they have cut their teeth. With these materials he will make up a column.

There is no question too indiscreet for these enterprising inquisitors: they would have interviewed St. Anthony in his hut.

Do not shout victory, either, because you have succeeded in getting rid of the interviewer without replying to his questions. It is in such cases that the American journalist reveals himself in all his glory. To your stupefaction, the newspapers next day will have an account of the conversation which you *might have had* with their reporters.

If my advice be worth giving, the best thing you can do, when the interviewer presents himself, and says, "I am a reporter, sir, and I have come to ask you for a few moments' chat," is to say to him:

"Mad to see you. Pray be seated."

After all, interviewing is an operation that one

survives; and, to be just, I must say that American reporters in general are courteous, obliging, and—which is simply astounding when one considers that they rarely take notes—exact in their accounts of interviews.

The courage, too, with which the interviewer braves rebuffs, and the philosophy with which he pockets abuse, are nothing short of admirable. For my part, I never could find a cross word to say to these intruders; and I had my reward in reading in the papers that it was a pleasure to interview me, because I submitted to the operation with such good grace.

On the 11th of November, 1887, at 9 a.m., the *Germanic*, after a terribly rough passage of nine days, entered the magnificent harbour of New York. The sun had risen resplendent in a cloudless blue sky. We had just passed Bartholdi's statue of "Liberty," and it seemed as if France were not very far off. It was a sweet sensation, and instinctively I had raised my hat. All at once the *Germanic* stopped. A little steam-tug drew up alongside, and there stepped on board one or two custom-house officers, followed by several other persons.

"Look out!" cried one of my fellow-passengers, seeing that I appeared to be unconscious of danger.

"What is the matter?" I asked.

"The interviewers!"

"Nonsense! Not here, surely!" I exclaimed.

No sooner were the words out of my mouth than

two young men handed me their cards, with the announcement that they were journalists.

"We have come to present our respects to you," they said, "and to wish you a pleasant time in our country."

While they uttered these words they scanned me from head to foot, jotting a few strokes on their note-books. They were taking my portrait, which appeared next morning at the head of the articles that the press of New York thought fit to devote to me. The portrait was a flattering one. One paper, however, gave the following description of your humble servant:

"Max O'Rell is a rather globular Frenchman of about forty." Then followed a description of my travelling suit and other effects.

"Globular!" The idea!

"Forty!" No, gentlemen; thirty-nine, if you please.

But to return to our reporters.

Question after question was put with the rapidity of lightning flashes.

"Have you had a good passage?"

"Are you sick at sea?"

"Where were you born?"

"How old are you?"

"How long do you mean to stay in the United States?"

"How much do your books bring you in?"

This catechising began to annoy me.

"Excuse me, gentlemen," I said; "I am tired,

and am going to the hotel to rest. I shall be happy to see you this afternoon."

Oh! that first afternoon in New York, spent in the company of the interviewers; I shall never forget it!

The office of my manager, Major* Pond, was situated on the ground floor of the Everett House, where I had put up. Thither I repaired after lunch, to undergo the operation of tapping by eight interviewers at once.

"Ah!" said one of them, after the usual salutations, "we are going to bore you; so let us begin at the beginning."

Here I smiled.

"I know your first question," I said; "you are going to ask me whether it is the first time I have been in America."

"That is generally our first question, it is true; but I have another to ask you before. You have just eaten your first meal in America; what did you have?"

I submitted with a good grace, and replied as seriously as I could.

"Gentlemen, I have just been in for a piece of turbot, a beefsteak and potato chips, a celery salad, and a vanilla ice."

"And now," remarked another reporter, "I have an important question to put to you. I hope it will not astonish you."

* My manager, as the reader will observe, was one of the rare Americans who are not Colonels.

"Oh, I am in America," I replied, "and quite ready not to be astonished at anything."

"Well, then," said he, "I wanted to ask you what are your impressions of America?"

"Excuse me," I exclaimed; "I have only been in it three hours, and those three hours have been spent in this hotel. You must really allow me to abstain for the moment from telling you what I think of America; for you will admit, I hope, that one must have passed a whole day at least in America, in order to judge it with any accuracy."

Here I rolled a cigarette, and rang for a lemon squash.

The reporters immediately made an entry in their note-books.

"What is that you have put down?" I asked.

A young fellow, with a face beaming with activity and intelligence, replied:

"I wrote that at this point of our conversation you rolled a cigarette, and rang for a lemon squash."

"Really, gentlemen," I ventured to observe, "do you imagine that such a remark as that can possess the slightest interest for your readers?"

"Without doubt," they replied, and all their faces wore an imperturbable seriousness that nearly made me roar with laughter.

"Oh, in that case excuse me; I ought to have known that in America, as elsewhere, an intelligent man knows his business. Go on with your questions; you interest me greatly."

The fact is, I began to be immensely amused.

The questions recommenced. One wanted biographical details; another, the origin of my pseudonym. One wished to know if I worked in the morning, the afternoon, or the evening; another, whether I worked sitting or standing up, and also whether I used ruled paper and quill pens. One man asked me whether I thought in English or in French; another, whether General Boulanger had any chance of soon being elected President of the French Republic. If I crossed my legs during the conversation, if I took off my glasses, nothing escaped these journalists; everything was jotted down.

The questions they asked really appeared to me so commonplace, so trivial, that I was almost ashamed to think I was the hero of this little farce.

With the idea of giving them something better worth writing, I launched into anecdotes, and told a few to these interviewers.

This brought about a little scene which was quite comic. If I looked at one reporter a little oftener than the rest, while I told an anecdote, he would turn to his brethren and say:

"This story is for my paper; you have no right to take it down, it was told especially to me."

"Not at all," would cry the others; "it was told to all of us."

In spite of this, the harmony of the meeting was not disturbed; and it was easy to see that an excellent spirit of fellowship prevailed in the fraternity.

With the exception of a phrase or two occasionally jotted down, they took no notes of my answers to their questions; and I wondered how it was possible that, with so few notes, they would manage to make an article of a hundred or two hundred lines, that would be acceptable in an important paper, out of an interview so insignificant and so devoid of interest, according to my idea, as this one.

After having spent nearly two hours over me, the reporters shook hands, expressed themselves as much obliged to me, and went their way.

How childish these Americans are! thought I. Is it possible that a conversation such as I have just had with those reporters can interest them?

Next day I procured all the New York morning papers, more from curiosity, I must say in justice to myself, than from vanity; for I was not at all proud of my utterances of the day before.

Judge of my surprise, on opening the first paper, to find two columns full of amusing details, picturesque descriptions, well-told anecdotes, witty remarks; the whole cleverly mingled and arranged by men who, I had always supposed, were simple stenographers.

Everything was faithfully reported and artistically set down. The smallest incidents were rendered interesting by the manner of telling. The Major, for instance, who, accustomed to this kind of interview for many years, had peacefully dropped asleep, comfortably installed, with his head on the sofa pillows and his feet on the back of a chair; my

own gestures; the description of the pretty and elegantly furnished office—all was very crisp and vivid. They had turned everything to account; even the arrival of the lemon squash was made to furnish a little paragraph that was droll and attractive. You might have imagined that the whole thing was the first chapter of a novel, commencing with the majestic entry of a steamer into New York harbour.

Well, I said to myself, the American journalist knows, at any rate, how to make a savoury hash out of very little.

Three years ago, when Mr. Grover Cleveland, President of the United States, married the prettiest and most charming of his countrywomen, he chose Deer Park as a suitable place to pass his honeymoon in, far from the world and its bustle, and, above all, far from the reporters. However, the ex-President knew only too well the spirit of enterprise that possesses his countrymen; and to put himself out of reach of the interviewers, and make sure of tranquillity, he thought it well to employ eight detectives to guard the approaches to his retreat. This number was soon found insufficient, for the enemy made his appearance in the neighbourhood. The pickets had to be reinforced, and a week later twelve Argus-eyed watchers were on the alert to prevent any person whomsoever from getting within three hundred yards of the cottage. The interviewers were outdone, and had

to admit themselves baffled. The papers had no details worth giving to their readers.

This must have been enough to make any enterprising editor tear his hair, or go and hang himself.

To have in one's editorial drawer such headings as "Grover in Clover," or "Drops of Honey Sipped in Deer Park," and not to be able to use them!

It was hard lines.

A little anecdote to finish with:

A young American lady had married a man well known as a young political orator of great promise.

The day after the wedding, her husband having gone out, she heard some little struggling outside her drawing-room door; and suddenly there entered a very well-dressed man, who made her a most polite bow.

She gazed at him, quite bewildered.

"Excuse me, madam; but you married Mr. John D. yesterday, I believe?"

"I did, sir; but . . ."

"I am the Interviewer!"

*Tableau!*

## CHAPTER XXI.

*Literature in the United States. — Poets. — Novelists. — Essayists. — Critics. — Historians. — Humorists. — Journalists. — Writers for the Young. — Future of American Literature.*

AMERICA has not yet produced a transcendent literary genius; but she has the right to be proud of a national literature which includes poets, historians, novelists, essayists, and critics of a superior order.

The English admit that the best history of their literature has been written by a Frenchman, M. Taine. The *Athenæum* acknowledged, a short while ago, that the best criticism on the English poets of the Victorian era was that written by Mr. Edmund Clarence Stedman, himself one of the most graceful bards of contemporary America.

In this rapid sketch, I must needs confine myself to the mention of merely the principal names which adorn the different branches of American literature.

In poetry, the bright lights are William Cullen Bryant and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, both pure and noble, and as much appreciated by the English as by their own compatriots; Edgar Allan Poe, James Russell Lowell, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Edmund Clarence Stedman, Bayard Taylor, John

Greenleaf Whittier, Walt Whitman, Richard Watson Gilder, Edgar Fawcett, William Winter (the celebrated dramatic critic of the *New York Tribune)*, Maria Brooks, and a number of women, who form a graceful garland in this garden of poets. In the Western dialects, a young poet, Mr. Whitcombe Riley, knows how to draw tears through the smiles which his humour provokes: he promises to be the future Jasmin of America.

In the domain of romance, we find writers whose reputation is as firmly established in Europe as in America. Who has not read in his youth the novels of Fenimore Cooper? Who has not thrilled over the weird tales of Poe? Among the most famous names in fiction are also Washington Irving, Parker Willis, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Marion Crawford, Frank Stockton, George W. Cable, Frances Hodgson Burnett, Henry James, W. D. Howells, Julian Hawthorne, Thomas Bailey Aldrich, Charles Dudley Warner, Bret Harte (who is also a poet), Edward Eggleston, Brander Matthews, Eliza Wetherell. All these names are household words wherever the English tongue is spoken. The greatest success of the century has been attained by an American novel, directed against slavery, and instrumental in its destruction.

Its author, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, is a sister of the celebrated Henry Ward Beecher, whom America still mourns.

In the philosophical essay, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Robert Ingersoll are unapproachable in their

different styles. The first shines by his originality and a subtle power of reasoning; the second by the grandeur of his language, his keen, clear reasoning power, and his humour and pathos.

In literary criticism must be named George William Curtis, as well as Stedman and Winter, already named among the poets.

History is perhaps, of all the branches of American literature, that which has found its highest expression. Washington Irving, with his *History of Columbus;* Prescott, with the *History of Ferdinand and Isabella,* the *History of the Conquest of Mexico and Peru,* and the *History of Philip II.;* Bancroft, with a *History of the American Revolution;* Hildreth, Sparks, and others, have produced a national history from the discovery of their country down to our own days.

It seems curious that the vast and grandiose regions they inhabit should not have inspired the Americans with taste and talent for descriptions of Nature. Fenimore Cooper is the only great scene painter produced by the immensities of the great Western Continent.

Humorists swarm in the United States. Artemus Ward and Mark Twain are two pseudonyms justly famous at home and abroad. There is a third on the road that leads to similar celebrity. Bill Nye has the same droll way as Mark Twain of droning out irresistible comicalities with that solemn *sang froid* which is not met with outside the frontiers of Yankeeland. When he mounts the platform, the audience prepares to be dislocated with laughter.

Although the names of Charles A. Dana, Whitelaw Reid, Park Godwin, and many others, are well known to the reading public of America, it is in the large Reviews, and not in the newspapers, that really literary articles are to be found.

Children—if there are any children in America—are not forgotten by literature. It is safe to affirm that there is no country where children are so well written for, by authors who have the secret of instructing them while they charm and amuse them. Love and sympathy for children must be a spontaneous outgrowth of the gay and tender American character. Mrs. Hodgson Burnett, the late Louisa Alcott, Mrs. Lippincott (better known as Grace Greenwood), and Fanny Fern, will for ages to come fascinate the whole of the English-speaking juvenile world.

In these rapid outlines, I must have omitted many names. I hope I have mentioned enough to show a guarantee of a brilliant literary future for the country.

A nation so intelligent, so energetic, so prominent in the world of action, could not possibly be sterile in the domain of thought.

## CHAPTER XXII.

*The Stage in the United States.—The "Stars."—French Plays. Mr. Augustin Daly's Company.—The American Public. —The Theatres.—Detailed Programmes.—A Regrettable Omission.*

THE American stage boasts some excellent actors; but it owes its prestige rather to the talent of a few brilliant individualities than to distinction of *ensemble*.

The plays are written for certain actors, and the secondary parts are made to serve the purpose of throwing up the "star." This is why the French plays that are transplanted to the stage of America generally fail. I saw one very striking proof of this in New York. Mr. Abbey, the indefatigable *impresario*, director of Wallack's Theatre, brought out *L'Abbé Constantin*. The principal *rôle* was entrusted to Mr. John Gilbert, a veteran of the American stage. Certainly M. Got himself could not have played the part of the good old priest with more simplicity, tenderness, or pathos; but this was not enough in a piece which demands at least half a dozen actors of talent, and the play was a complete failure.

French plays are written, not for "stars," but for whole companies of actors. The author knows that such and such an actor will play the lover, that certain others will take the *rôles* of the father, the

prosaic notary, the brilliant officer, the valet; that certain actresses will create the parts of the *coquette*, the *ingénue*, the *soubrette*, the *duenna*. He knows that the director will only entrust the members of his company with such parts as are well within their province. The translator of these plays runs his bark with a light heart towards the rocks of failure. Sometimes he does worse than translate—he adapts. A study of French manners is transferred to America with American personages. The play becomes incomprehensible, unreal, and it is not the acting of a "star" that can redeem or save it.

American theatres are not subventioned by the State, and private enterprise can scarcely afford to give the public the luxury of a whole company of talent. The "star" is usually his or her own manager, draws the public, and realises the profits. The *répertoire* consists of two or three plays, which are performed before a New York audience for a month or two, and then taken around to the chief cities of the States.

This is why one sees fresh companies nearly every week in half the theatres. To-day a drama, next week a comedy, opera-bouffe the week after. Sometimes the change is still more brusque. Mr. Irving and Miss Terry gave a series of performances at the "Star" Theatre, New York, during the month of March last. On their departure, they were succeeded by a troupe of performing monkeys. The theatre was just as likely to have been hired by travelling revivalists.

There is but one *company* of actors in America, and that is Mr. Augustin Daly's excellent company of comedians. I have seen comedies played with much *ensemble* at the Union Square, Madison Square, and Lyceum theatres, in New York; but Mr. Daly's picked company is incomparably superior to any other to be seen in America, or, for that matter, in England either, if one excepts the admirably even opera company of the Savoy. Mr. John Drew is a young lover, agreeable to look at, gentlemanly, natural, persuasive, full of life. Mr. James Lewis, whose grotesque face is a veritable fortune, is the best high-class comic actor on the American stage; Miss Ada Rehan's coquetry is irresistible. A certain coaxing drawl in her musical voice lends great seductiveness to a very handsome presence, and gives an additional charm to her clever acting. Mrs. Gilbert, who is so like Mdlle. Jouassin, of the *Comédie-Française*, as to be mistaken for her, is the equal of that actress in some of her "duennas" parts. The actor whose *rôle* consists of handing a card or letter to his master is an artist. This is the stage as we are used to it France.

If good companies are rare in America, good actors are numerous.

The greatest American actor is Mr. Edwin Booth, who is so justly famous for his interpretations of Shakesperian *rôles* in America and England. Mr. Lawrence Barrett is also a highly talented tragedian. In comedy, two veterans, Mr. John Gilbert and Mr.

Lester Wallack* must be named first, then Messrs. Robson and Crane. In purely American plays, Mr. Joseph Jeffreson is an unrivalled exponent of simple, touching parts. I had the good fortune to see him in *Rip Van Winkle*, a *rôle* which belongs to him as *Pierre Chopart* belongs to M. Paulin Ménier. Mayo, Florence, Harrigan, are names which are connected with a thousand successes in the minds of the Americans. Mr. Steele Mackaye is a good actor, besides being a dramatic author of great ability. His play, *Paul Kauvar*, with its realistic scenes of the French Revolution, would doubtless draw all Paris, if ever the directors of the Porte St. Martin or the Ambigu took it into their heads to mount it. For original, fantastic creations, the palm must be awarded to Mr. Richard Mansfield. I wish M. Octave Feuillet the pleasure of seeing this young and versatile actor play the part of Baron Chevrial in *The Parisian Romance*. The conception is as bold as it is artistic. For cleverness at "making-up," Mr. Mansfield is unrivalled.

I was not astonished to see *La Tosca* succeed in the United States. M. Sardou, having written this play for a "star," a "star" suffices for the successful playing of it. Miss Fanny Davenport's acting combines vigour, grace, and dignity. In the third and fourth acts of *La Tosca*, this actress rises to the level of the great *tragédiennes*.

The greatest actress on the American stage is a Pole. Madame Modjeska has no living rival but

* America has just lost this excellent actor.

Madame Sarah Bernhardt, whom, to my thinking, she sometimes even surpasses. Her interpretation of the *Dame aux Camélias* appeared to me superior to that of her great French rival. Madame Modjeska does not, perhaps, put into this part the fire, the depth of passion, that Madame Sarah Bernhardt displays, but she endows it with more feminine grace —with more purity. She appeals less to the senses, but more to the heart; she subjugates the spectator less, but touches him more: it is the courtesan redeemed, purified by love, as M. Alexandre Dumas conceived her.

The American theatres are spacious, elegant, well lit and well ventilated. The seats are comfortable, and that French bugbear, the *ouvreuse de loge*, is unknown.

The ground floor is entirely covered with stalls, but the rise, from the proscenium to the back of the theatre, is so considerable that the spectators sitting on the last row have as good a view of the stage as those in front; and a good thing it is so, for the women adorn their heads with such monuments of millinery when they go to the play, that, if the floor were horizontal and you had a stall that was not on the first row, you would have to trust to the kindness of the ladies in front to tell you what went on upon the stage.

With the exception of the Metropolitan Opera House and two or three other large theatres, the auditoriums are only fitted up with stalls, one or two galleries, and a very few boxes.

Prices are moderate, and range from six to two shillings. For lower tastes or leaner purses, there are the Bowery theatres, where melodramas, variety shows, and harlequinades are served up, and the price of admission is but sixpence or a shilling.

The Americans have an unbearable trick of arriving late at the theatre. For twenty minutes after the curtain rises there is a constant bustling and rustling of new comers, which debars you from the pleasure of following the actors' speeches. If the play begins at eight, they come at a quarter-past; if it begins at a quarter-past, they come at half-past, and so on. At the time appointed for the curtain to rise the stalls are empty. This bad habit annoys the actors and disturbs the spectators; but the evil is incurable, and managers try vainly to stop it. I know one who followed the advertisements of his play by this paragraph:

"The public are solemnly warned that, unless the whole of the first scene be witnessed, the subsequent action of the play cannot be understood."

His efforts were crowned with failure. Not to understand the play is a pity; but not to create a sensation when one comes in, dressed in one's most killing attire, is out of the question.

It is the same at concerts and lectures. Those who have engaged their seats in advance, come in a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes after the time fixed for commencing. When every one is placed, the concert or lecture begins. The early comers, who have to wait until the late ones have arrived,

utter not a murmur. The patience of the American public is angelic.

As the public enter the vestibule of an American theatre they are supplied with programmes. These are gratis, and give an argument of the play, also the names of all the *employés* of the establishment. First the names of the actors and actresses, coupled with those they bear in their respective *rôles;* then the name of the manager, the business manager, the treasurer, the assistant-treasurer, the musical director, the master machinist, the master carpenter, the master of properties, the chief engineer, the head usher, the advertising agent, the detective, the gas-lighter, etc. If, instead of gas, theatres were lit with candles, as of yore, the snuffer would have his name announced to the public in this flourish of trumpets.

If there is a piano used in the play, the programme gives you the name of the maker; if a repast is served in one of the acts, the programme tells you the name of the *restaurateur* who provides it. If there are rugs and carpets, you are informed who sold them. In a word, you are made acquainted with all the slightest details concerning the management of the theatre.

There is sometimes an omission, but only one. It occasionally happens that the name of the author of the play is not given. After all, when one goes to see the *Parisian Romance*, of what interest can it be to know the name of the author?

It is only Octave Feuillet.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*The Religion of the Americans.—Religious Sects.—Why Jonathan Goes to Church.—Walk in, Ladies and Gentlemen, "this is the Place to be Saved and Happy."—Irresistible Invitations.—The Esoterists.—Why Die when Immortality is Attainable?—The Recipe.—Faith Cure.—A Highly-recommended Book.—Seventh Day Hypocrisy.—To Choose Goods is not to Buy Them.—"Great Scott!"—Religion and Republicanism Live Happily together in America.*

THE Americans are Christians; that is to say, they attend church on Sundays. Like other Christians, they attend to business on week-days.

In America, religion is served up with sauces to suit all palates. Independently of the Catholic religion, there are 189 different religious sects. England has only 185.

Every good preacher draws a full congregation, no matter to which sect he belongs. The church in itself is not the attraction, and the minister has no other influence over the people than that which he exercises by his oratorical talents. A religious or moral lecture is as popular as a literary lecture, a concert, or a play.

Put a bad preacher into an American pulpit, and he will soon empty the church; replace him by a

gifted orator, and soon there will be "standing room" only, and every seat will be at a premium.

The priesthood is not a vocation; it is a profession: no talent, no success. An American will go and listen to the minister of a sect differing from his own, rather than sit and be bored by a tiresome preacher belonging to his own denomination. He will rather go to hear Dr. MacGlyn, the excommunicated Roman Catholic priest, or Dr. Felix Adler, the eloquent agnostic; religious as he is, he will sometimes regret that Colonel Ingersoll does not appear in public on Sundays any longer; Protestant as he is, he has no scruple about going to hear a musical mass in the Catholic cathedral; in fact, you can see him everywhere, except in the churches where dulness prevails, and the mind waits in vain for fresh nourishment.

The churches advertise a preacher in the newspapers as the theatres advertise a "star." In default of a good preacher, other attractions are put forward to draw the public. How resist the two following appeals, posted at the doors of a New York and a Chicago church? I copied them word for word with great care:

"Musical evangelists, solos, short sermons. The place to be happy and saved."

Walk in, ladies and gentlemen, walk in.

The other, more seductive still, was worded thus:

"No reason for not coming. Free seats, cheerful services. Books supplied to the congregation."

The public are requested to leave the books in the seats after use.

Religious sects multiply every day. No doctrine is too absurd to make proselytes.

The latest religious invention in America is Esoterism, which promises immortality to its followers—immortality, that is all! The doctrine of the Esoterists teaches that, if man were really pure, and followed the precepts of the Gospel to the letter, he would become immortal, not in Paradise, but here below. As it is probable that no Christian ever yet succeeded in following minutely the precepts of the Gospel, the Esoterists may be right. To live for ever, say they, you have only to remain virtuous, even in the married state. Celibacy must be embraced. Celibacy pure and simple, however, is not sufficient; for where there is no struggle, there is no victory. Devotees must, therefore, marry; but, in all honour, remain celibates. If you succeed in mastering your passions, no malady will attack you, and you will become immortal.

"But," you will say, "do the Esoterists never die?" Yes, they die—once; but, according to them, this does not prove the fallacy of their belief. If they die, it simply proves that they have failed to attain the necessary degree of perfection.

Now, the Esoterists are safe to continue with us; for either they will arrive at perfection and become immortal, or they will fall away from grace and will have children to swell their ranks. The

head of this sect, which is as yet only about two years old, claims that when the Esoterists attain perfection, not only will they be immortal, but they will have a clear insight into the future, a gift which will enable them to amass great riches. And, indeed, the utility of such an accomplishment, on the Stock Exchange, for instance, must be apparent at a glance.

Another sect pretends to be able to cure all disease by faith. The faith of these fanatics is not shaken by the death of their patients. "If they had had more faith, they would have recovered." Doctor Sangrado cured all illnesses by bleedings and hot water. When a patient died, it was because the bleeding had been too copious or not copious enough, and the water administered too hot or too cool. The theory remained excellent.

All these new sects are commercial enterprises, some of them established on the plan of limited liability companies. A room is hired, and supplied with a table and chairs, and a few novelty-hunters are soon attracted to the embryo temple. These in turn draw others, and by-and-by a more imposing meeting-place is secured, and the pockets of the proselytes are appealed to for funds to found what is called "The Lord's Treasury." Many poor simple folk have been persuaded into giving all they possessed to the "Lord's Treasury."

No need to put by a reserved fund: human credulity is an inexhaustible mine.

Fortune-tellers are punished with from six

months' to two years' imprisonment. How is it the law allows schemers to found a "Lord's Treasury" by promising immortality to the geese who bring their money to it? It looks as if, in America, as in England, swindling may be practised with impunity in the name of religion.

One meets with just as many cases of the adroit blending of the worship of God and Mammon.

A publisher, who is not above making money by the sale of books stolen from English and French authors, is yet godly enough to build a church with part of the proceeds.

An immense quantity of literary piracies isssues from another firm, whose warehouse rejoices in the appellation of "Bible House."

A popular preacher sells his church sittings by auction.

Another furnishes to a syndicate advance sheets of the sermons he preaches on Sunday; so that the principal papers throughout the United States are able to furnish their readers, on Monday morning, with the full discourse delivered the day before in Brooklyn.

During my stay in America, a well-known evangelist published a volume of sermons with the following preface: "God has been kind enough to own the words when I spoke them. I hope He will give His blessing to the book, now that the same words appear in print." Many books are published in France with the remark, "A work approved of

by Mgr. the Archbishop of——" A volume, advertised as having been owned and blessed by the Lord Himself, ought to have a wild sale.

Sabbatarian hypocrisy is as flourishing in the eastern States of America as in England and Scotland.

I was visiting the sub-tropical Exhibition at Jacksonville one Sunday, and at a certain stall I chose a few little natural curiosities.

"I cannot sell them to you to-day," said the stall-keeper to me, after well puffing his wares.

"No? Why?"

"Because it is Sunday. I can put them aside for you; but you must *buy* them to-morrow."

This is the kind of thing one is supposed to admire.

A truly edifying sight is that of the noisy, dirty, blaspheming crowd collected on a Sunday evening outside Madison Square Gardens, New York, on the eve of a "six days' go-as-you-please walking match." From six or seven in the evening there is a betting, swearing match outside the gates. But the walking only begins at one minute past midnight.

Not to take the name of God in vain, the English have invented many euphemisms; some men, imagining, I suppose, that the Deity takes no cognisance of any language but English, venture so far as to say *mon Dieu* or *mein Gott*.

At this kind of thing the Americans are as clever as the English. They have invented *Great Scott!*

Something admirable in all the main religious sects of America is their national character.

When I hear it said that religion is the sworn enemy of progress, especially of Republican institutions, I turn to America and say to myself, "This is not true."

There is no minister of religion, from the archbishops down to the most unlettered preachers of all the small *isms*, who would dare to tell his congregation that liberty is not the most precious, the most sacred of their possessions, or that the Republic is not the most admirable form of Government—the only possible one—for America.

In France, there is much indifference on the subject of religion; but a great deal of incredulity is affected to satisfy a political bias. I am certain that if, in France, you searched into the hearts of the people, you would find there much less atheism than in many other nations. Religious belief seems to be the apanage of the Royalist party, and other people think they make a show of Republicanism by throwing over the belief of the Royalists. The religious man is rather looked upon as a political enemy than as a religious antagonist. This is the true explanation of much apparent agnosticism in France. It must also be remarked that plenty of Royalists only affect piety, and go regularly to church, as a protest against Republicanism, and

that many Republicans may be excused for taking this display of religion for an act of hostility towards their pet institutions.

This state of things is deplorable. Both sides are to blame for it.

In England and America, where the form of Government is questioned by no one, religion does not clash with progress and liberty, but lives with democracy in peace and harmony, as becomes a faith whose grand precept is: "Love ye one another."

## CHAPTER XXIV.

*Colonel Ingersoll's Ideas.—The Man.—His Life.—His Works.—A Minister declines to take his Place either in this World or the Next.*

ONE day asked one of the cleverest ladies of New York whether she knew Colonel Ingersoll.

"No," she answered, "I do not know him, and I do not wish to make his acquaintance."

"May I ask why?" I said.

She replied:

"Simply because I am told it is impossible to know him without admiring and loving him."

"Well?"

"Well, I don't want to admire or love him."

I had the honour of making his acquaintance, and, like all those who have approached and known him, I soon loved and admired him.

He is one of the greatest figures of his great country. In a book on contemporary America one must needs speak of this celebrated advocate. He is a personality apart. He has little in common with the rest of his countrymen but the title of Colonel.

Once more I say it: in this book of jottings I do not sit in judgment, I merely describe impressions of

what I have seen and heard. It is not necessary to endorse a man's theories in order to enjoy his society; and this is especially true in the case of Colonel Ingersoll, who is many-sided in his powers, and who charms theologians and agnostics alike when religion is not on the *tapis*.

Colonel Robert Ingersoll is a man of about sixty, six feet high, and strongly built, a colossus physically and intellectually; the eyes sparkle with wit and beam with the joy of life; the mouth is humorous and smiling; the head large and well planted on broad shoulders; the face shaven; the brain bristling with great thoughts; a man with the heart of a lion to fight the battles of life, but the heart of a woman in presence of human suffering.

He has substituted for the love of religion the religion of love and of the family. According to him, religion should have but one aim: to teach us how to be happy in this life. He repeats, with Christ: "Love one another; do not to others what you would not have others do to you." And he adds: "A God that is represented as weaving webs to catch the souls of men whom he has created is not adorable." As to a future life, the Colonel does not commit himself. He says: "We do not know, we cannot tell, whether death is a door or a wall: a spreading of pinions to soar or the folding of wings for ever." In the eyes of many pious people his theories are abominable, and he is the Antichrist: but the Americans are unanimous in admitting his extraordinary talents; and among the dear friends

of the Colonel and his family are many Presbyterians, some of them ministers.

Antichrist, if you will—that is, if you can imagine such a personage endowed with every moral and intellectual faculty. In his presence, men feel themselves small, and women put their hands over their eyes, being careful to keep the fingers well apart. A decidedly dangerous Antichrist, this.

Mr. Ingersoll is not only America's greatest living orator, he is a great writer and a great thinker: an infusion, as it were, of Johnson, Voltaire, and Milton. He possesses the logic of the first, the *persiflage* of the second, and some of the sublimity of the third. His arguments are constructed like geometrical propositions; his style is vigorous, as clear as it is graceful, as poetic as it is humorous; and his verve is inexhaustible.

The trinity that he worships is the trinity of Science: Reason, Observation, and Experience.

His enemies call him Atheist, because he does not believe in *their* God. Man has made unto himself a God in his own image, and is apt to treat as Atheists all who do not worship him.

But Voltaire himself, who said that "if a God did not already exist, it would be necessary to invent Him," is still called an Atheist by many ignorant people.

I never heard Mr. Ingersoll say he did not believe in a God.

He will not acknowledge the existence of Jehovah, the God of the Jews: a God who commanded the

people of His choice to exterminate their enemies, sparing neither old men, women, nor children. In his eyes Jehovah is a myth, the creation of a cowardly, ungrateful, and bloodthirsty race.

Mr. Ingersoll is not the only earnest seeker after truth who has been puzzled to reconcile the idea of this cruel, revengeful, implacable deity with that of the gentle, merciful Saviour who taught the doctrine of love and forgiveness in Palestine, and bade His disciples put up their swords in the presence of His persecutors.

"If God exists," said Mr. Ingersoll to a Presbyterian minister, who was engaged in a discussion with him upon religion, "he is certainly as good as you are." "*Your* God," he says to the Presbyterians, "is a Torquemada who denies to his countless victims the mercy of death." And when he sees human miseries, the injustices of this world, war, pestilence, famines, and inundations, the Colonel reproaches Jehovah with passing too much time in numbering the hairs of His creatures.

In the opinion of Robert Ingersoll, a religion is not moral which practically says to man: "Do not sin; but if you do sin, console yourself, come to me and I will forgive you." Such a theory is not calculated to improve mankind, who should be taught to do good, not in the hope of being one day rewarded for it, not in the fear of being punished for the neglect of it, but out of love and admiration for what is good, and with the aim of adding to the happiness of their fellow-creatures. Mr. Ingersoll's

religion is the religion of humanity; he says: "Happiness is the only good; the time to be happy is now, and the way to be happy is to make others so." Live to do good, to love, and be beloved by those around, and then lie down and sleep with the consciousness of having done your duty to men. Do not ask pardon of God for an injury done to man. Ask pardon of the man, and make reparation to him for your offence.

"I rob Smith," exclaims Mr. Ingersoll in the ironical language he is such a master of, "God forgives me. How does that help Smith?"

He maintains that the Christian religion teaches less the love of an infinitely just and merciful God, than the fear of a demon thirsting for human victims. This charge is borne out by a proverb used by the Scot, who is a student of human nature:

"*If the deil were de'ed, God wad na be served so weel.*"

The Colonel maintains that if man has had hands given him to feel, eyes to see, ears to hear, he has also a brain to think, a heart to love, and intelligence to reason with.

He does not attack so much the Catholic religion, which rests on faith; for a religion which rests purely on faith is not a matter for reasoning and argument. But he attacks rather a Protestantism which prides itself upon resting on reason as well as on faith.

The theories of Colonel Ingersoll are the natural outcome of the introduction of reasoning into religious matters.

Things which are felt only, cannot be discussed; things which are incomprehensible are not matter for explanation.

Protestantism is a mixture of faith and reason agreeing pretty badly together, it must be confessed. The Protestant takes the Bible for a book, every word of which is inspired of God. He interprets it in his own fashion, and proves out of it every doctrine he requires to found a new sect. The very drunkard is not at a loss to find an excuse for his drinking, and turning to Isaiah (lxv. 13), comforts himself with: "Behold, my servants shall drink."

As he looks on at the Protestants squabbling over the signification of biblical passages, the Colonel laughingly says: "It is to be regretted that your deity did not express himself more clearly."

Needless to say that he looks upon the Bible, not as an inspired book, but as a collection of literature something akin to the *Arabian Nights*, and this is what makes discussion with him difficult, if not out of the question. How is it possible to imagine a discussion between Faith and Reason?

To Protestants, the practice of religion is an occupation for Sundays. To Mr. Ingersoll, it is an occupation for every waking hour, and consists in accomplishing your duty to your fellow-creatures.

George Sand says the fanatic loves God to the exclusion of man. The theories of Colonel Ingersoll, lofty and noble as most of them are, verge upon fanaticism in the sense that they teach the love of mankind to the exclusion of Him who so loved man.

The Colonel robs the poor and sorrowing of that which helps them to endure their ills, a belief in a better world to come.

Son of a Protestant minister, Robert Ingersoll early showed special aptitude for the discussion of theological questions. By the age of sixteen, he had thoroughly studied the Old Testament, and would reason upon it like a dòctor of divinity. The father in vain drew Robert's attention to the beauties of the Bible, the son could see little in it but absurdities and inconsistencies. The old minister was heard to say: "It grieves me to hear my Robbie talk so, but I declare he is too much for me—I cannot answer him."

Who can answer Ingersoll? is a question often asked. Apparently, not the ministers of the hundreds of different Protestant sects that flourish in America; not Mr. Gladstone, student of the Bible and profound reasoner though he be.

For more than a year the President of the XIXth Century Club of New York was trying to get a Protestant clergyman to break a lance with this redoubtable agnostic in public, but without avail. Not one felt equal to the task.

That which makes this man so formidable is not so much his eloquence, his quick repartee, his sarcasm, his pathos, his humour; it is, above all, the life he leads, the example he sets of all the domestic virtues. One must have had the privilege of knowing him intimately, of penetrating into that sanctuary

of conjugal happiness, his home, before one can form an idea of the respect that he must inspire even in those who abhor his doctrines. His house is the home of the purest joys; it holds four hearts that beat as one.

Mr. Ingersoll lives in one of the handsome houses on Fifth Avenue. His family consists of his wife and two lovely daughters, Athens and Venice, as an American whom I met at Colonel Ingersoll's used to call them. Indeed, one reminds you of the beautiful creations of Titian. The other seems like a mythological vision, a nymph from the banks of Erymanthus. As you look at her, while she speaks to you with her eyes modestly lowered, almost seeming to apologise for being so lovely, you involuntarily think of *Le Jeune malade* of André Chénier, that last of the Greek poets, as Edmond About called him.

Authors, journalists, artists, members of the thinking world of New York may be met at the Colonel's charming Sunday evenings. About eleven at night, when all but the intimate friends of the family have left, these latter draw around their host, and entice him to talk upon one of his favourite subjects: poetry, music, or maybe the "mistakes of Moses," while they listen with avidity. He knows his Shakespeare as thoroughly as the Bible, only he speaks of him with far more respect and admiration. He adores Wagner, whom he sets even above Beethoven. I mention this to prove once more that we all have our little faults, and that Mr. Ingersoll, in common with his fellow-mortals, is not perfect.

Between midnight and one in the morning, the last visitors reluctantly depart. On the way home you think of all the witty things that have been said; the arrows of satire that have been shot at hypocrisy and humbug; the ennobling humanitarian opinions that have been advanced; and though you may not feel converted, or diverted, or perverted to *Ingersollism*, you are sure to leave that house feeling fuller of goodwill towards all men, and saying to yourself, "What a delightful evening I have passed!"

I was present one evening at a meeting of the XIXth Century Club, to hear a discussion on "The poetry of the future." Colonel Ingersoll was to have taken part in it, but, being retained professionally at Washington, he was obliged to excuse himself at the eleventh hour. The President immediately telegraphed to a well-known minister, asking him to take the Colonel's place.

"I distinctly decline to take Colonel Ingersoll's place in this world or the next," exclaimed the recipient of the telegram, as soon as he had read it. The reverend gentleman nevertheless took part in the evening's debate, and when he repeated his repartee to the audience, was greeted with hearty laughter and applause.

Now, the lot of Colonel Ingersoll in this world is very enviable, for his profession brings him in a most handsome income. As to refusing his place in the next, what an absurdity!

When Robert Ingersoll presents himself at the

gates of Paradise, and St. Peter sees that good, open face, radiant with happiness, the doors will be thrown wide to let him pass, and the saint will say:

"Come, Robert, come in. Thy happy face pleases me. We have just let in a cargo of long-faced folk—Presbyterians, I 'll be bound—and it does one good to look at thee. Thou hast done thy utmost to stifle the hydra-headed monster, Superstition, and to destroy the infamous calumnies which are in circulation on the subject of the Lord. Come in, friend; thou hast loved, thou hast been beloved; thou hast preached concord, mercy, love, happiness: come take thy place amongst the benefactors of the human race."

## CHAPTER XXV.

*Justice.—Comparison Favourable to America.—Judicial Procedure.—The Accused was Paid Cash.—A Criminal Hunt.—The Juries and their Powers.—Slow Dealings of American Justice.—False Philanthropy.—Twelve or Sixteen Minutes at the Wrong End of a Rope.—A Savage Club Anecdote.*

I HAVE no intention of entertaining the reader on the subject of the judicial organisation in the United States. I refer him for that to the Tocquevilles of every country, to our own Tocqueville especially. I do not concern myself, in this volume, with American institutions, but simply with the ways and manners of the Americans.

I had just returned from America, and was sitting in the smoking-room of the North-Western Hotel, Liverpool. I was chatting with an American, fellow-passenger on the Atlantic voyage, while admiring St. George's Hall, which stands opposite. This magnificent building, which serves as a Court of Justice, is the finest modern edifice of the English provinces.

All at once we heard a blast of trumpets. A crowd rushed towards the Hall, and lined the flight of steps leading to the grand entrance. Heralds and lac-

queys, all bedizened with scarlet and gold, presently descended the steps, followed by police officers. Several carriages then drew up.

From one of these, there alighted a man arrayed in a scarlet robe and ermine tippet, and wearing a powdered wig. The scarlet robe, followed by the *cortège* which had formed, solemnly mounted the steps between the crowd, which stood gazing with open-mouthed and wide-eyed admiration.

"What show is there going on opposite?" asked the American, in the easy-going tone that so distinguishes the Yankee.

He was an "Innocent abroad."

"My dear sir," I said to him, "it is simply a judge going to try a thief or two. England honours her criminals with a great deal of parade, as you see."

My American was silent for a few minutes. He was probably adding up the salaries of the judge, the police officers, heralds and ushers, the lawyers' fees, the cost of the building, carriages, and show generally; and no doubt comparing the total with the pound or two stolen from his employer by a dishonest clerk, for whom all this grand representation was taking place.

Nothing is more simple than an American court of justice. Four walls innocent of decoration of any kind, a few plain chairs or benches. No uniforms, no robes, no wigs, no trumpets, no liveried ushers. The judge and the barristers are in black frock-coats. The ushers are not quite so well dressed as the barristers, and that is all.

As in England, the accused is not allowed speech. If he has questions to put, his counsel is at his side, and speaks for him. It is the counsel who examine and cross-examine the witnesses, and plead before the jury. The judge presides, and does nothing more.

The accused is provided with a chair in the middle of the room, almost in the midst of the public. Several times I was obliged to ask someone present: "Which of all those people is the prisoner?"

An American trial is completely shorn of parade. It is not, as in England, and especially in France, a grand spectacular performance, but simply a man appearing before his townsmen to plead guilty to a misdeed or to prove his innocence of it—it is a family wash, if I may be allowed the expression.

The simplicity of the procedure is such that one day, after having been introduced to a presiding judge, I was asked by him to take a seat at his side, so as to hear and see better all that went on.

Simplicity goes further still occasionally.

An accused, having one day got up and begun to apostrophise his judge in anything but polite terms, that representative of justice left his seat, took off his coat, made for the man, and gave him a sound drubbing; then, resuming his seat, he said to the lawyers:

"The incident, which has just occurred, has nothing to do with the case that we have to consider. As a man, I have given him a thrashing. As judge, I will now proceed with his case; please, go on."

This magistrate, far from resenting the insults of the accused, thought no more of them, after having paid the man cash in this way. He summed up in most impartial fashion, and the jury returned a verdict of "not guilty."

In France, we pay a legion—a host rather—of judges and police officers, to look after our security, and never should we dream of helping them in the exercise of their functions. If a crime remain wrapped in mystery, we say to ourselves: "I pay the police, it is for them to discover the criminal; it is not my business, and, besides, the profession of detective is not in my line."

It is not the same in the United States. There public safety concerns everyone.

The population of a town feels dishonoured by the perpetration of a crime in their midst. Everyone is on the alert to catch the criminal; men organise themselves into bands to search the country round. An assassin is tracked in the woods with bloodhounds and guns, like a wild beast; if he is discovered, and offers a very obstinate resistance, a bullet is lodged in his body, and the hunters go tranquilly home again.

When a crime has produced a violent sensation in a town and it is feared the criminal may not be judged there with impartiality, he is taken to a distance, out of the way of prejudices, to be tried.

This is a curious contrast with lynch law, of which I shall speak in another chapter.

Something else to admire.

In England and France, a jury only pronounces upon the innocence or guilt of the accused. In England, a jury has not even, as it has in France, the right to admit extenuating circumstances. English and French juries are often astounded when they hear the judge pronounce sentence. Their intention was to get the accused sent to prison for a year or two, and the judge gives him, perhaps, ten years' penal servitude.

In cases of assassination in England, the clerk of the court says to the jury, at the end of their sitting:

"Do you find the prisoner guilty of wilful murder?"

"Certainly he is guilty of killing, but in a moment of jealousy, perhaps. His wife deceived him, and he killed the wretch who dishonoured him."

"You have nothing to do with all that," the English jury is told; "you are merely to say whether the prisoner at the bar has done wilful murder."

And the jury, forced to say *Yes*, are obliged to send to the gibbet a man whom in their hearts they may respect. They are forced to condemn to death a miserable fellow-creature, maddened by misfortune, just as they do an assassin who has committed a long-planned murder of his neighbour for money.

The American juries not only decide the question of a prisoner's culpability or innocence, but they themselves pronounce sentence.

"We find," they say, "that the prisoner is guilty of such and such a crime in the first degree, or in the second degree, etc., and we therefore sentence him to such and such punishment."

Something which is much to be blamed is the procrastination of American justice. By going the right way to work, a condemned criminal may often succeed in getting his case to be tried again and again.

In cases of murder, what good can it do to keep a poor wretch, that it is decided to hang, in prison for a year or more? It is adding torture to death penalty.

If that were only all.

Jonathan is such a philanthropist that he with difficulty makes up his mind to execute a fellow-creature even legally. So, when he has kept a year in prison a criminal, whom he is at last forced to hang, he leads him to the scaffold, puts a rope round his neck, jerks him up in the air, and manages to take twelve or sixteen minutes dispatching him.

This is philanthropy with a vengeance, and it is to be hoped that execution by electricity, which has just been adopted by the Governor of New York State, will put an end to such sickening proceedings.

It is to be hoped, also, that the Americans will some day do better than that. I, for my part, do not doubt that they will abolish death sentences before very long. They are too intelligent not to understand that the death sentence deters no criminal, and this for a very simple reason. A crime is committed under the impulse of passion, or it has been premeditated. In the first case, the criminal never thinks of the punishment to come, he is blinded by passion ; in the second, he always believes he has planned his crime in such a manner as not to be found out.

To lighten this rather lugubrious subject, I will terminate with a little anecdote, which has never seen the light, and which I think is too delightfully humorous and pathetic to be allowed to remain unpublished.

The scene was the smoking-room of the Savage Club.

A notorious criminal had been hanged in the morning. Several members of the club were talking of the affair, and each one described what his feelings would be if he were led to the scaffold to be hanged.

During this conversation, an actor, well known, but to whom managers, I scarcely know why, never entrust any but secondary parts, sat silent in an armchair, sending up long puffs of smoke soaring to the ceiling.

"Hello, there is N., who has not given his

opinion," said one of the group, suddenly noticing the actor: "I say, N., tell us how you would feel if you were being led to the scaffold."

The actor raised his eyes to the ceiling and, after another puff at his cigar, said quietly:

"Well, boys, I should feel that at last I was trusted with a leading part."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

*Lynch Law.—Hanged, Burned, and Shot.—The Gaolers do not Answer for their Boarders.—The Humours of Lynching.*

LYNCH law is a summary justice which, in certain of the United States, is constantly being dealt out to criminals who, either from the insufficiency of the ordinary laws, or because of the absence of a judicial authority in the neighbourhood, might escape punishment. Not the least semblance of a trial, or even of examination, as a rule: the populace has taken it into its head that a certain individual is guilty of a crime, that suffices; he is sought out, torn from his family if he have one, led to the spot fixed upon for his execution, and there, without questioning or shrift, he is hanged, burned, or shot, according to the fancy of his executioners. Sometimes the criminal is in prison; but the process of the law is slow and uncertain, and the people fear that he may escape justice. Again, there may be a chance of the malefactor convincing the jury that he is innocent; this does not suit the humour of the enraged populace. They attack the prison, and demand that their prey be delivered over to them. If the governor of the prison refuses, the doors are burst open, and the prisoner is seized and forthwith led to execution.

It is to be hoped, for the credit of American civilisation, that this blot will soon be removed.

The word "Lynch" is derived from a proper name. John Lynch, a colonist of Carolina in the 17th century, was invested by his fellow-citizens with discretionary power to deal summarily with the social disorders inseparable from the growth of a colony. This measure was soon adopted in several other States of America for a similar reason.

The victims of Lynch law, innocent or guilty, are numerous. Before I went to America, I had no idea how numerous. Almost every day you may read in the American newspapers some horrible tale, such as the following:

"The village of Pemberton Ferry, in Florida, has just been plunged into the highest state of excitement by a horrible drama.

"Three negroes made their appearance at the house of a lady much respected in the neighbourhood, and asked most obsequiously for a drink. Finding that she was alone with her daughter, the three scoundrels 'burked' the poor women and outraged them.

"As soon as the crime became known, several inhabitants of Pemberton armed themselves, and set out in search of the criminals. After searching several hours in the neighbouring woods, the avenging band came across two suspicious-looking negroes in hiding. They were seized upon at once, led to a tree, and hanged to it. Then, with a view to extracting from them a confession of guilt, the aven-

gers unhanged them. After having protested their innocence for some time, the two negroes at last confessed themselves guilty.

"This carried the indignation of the Pemberton Ferry people to a state of paroxysm. In less time than it takes to describe it, a pile of pine-logs and dry branches was made at the foot of the tree and set fire to, and the two negroes were again hung, this time over the flames.

"The sight of these wretches, being lynched with such refinement of torture, was horrible to behold. Soon the executioners themselves, in spite of their rage and fury, could no longer bear the sight, and, taking pity on their victims, shot them to put an end to their sufferings. The two corpses were left hanging to the tree, to serve as warning."

The paper adds:

"The third negro has not yet been discovered; but, if he is caught, he will probably be lynched also."

Here, then, we have two wretched creatures, first hung, then unhung, and invited to confess. They are not confronted with their victims, who, however, could not have been at a great distance. They are rehung, burnt over a slow fire, and at last shot. This is pure savagedom.

When the operation of lynching is practised spontaneously, under the influence of excitement caused by the atrocity of such a crime as that committed by the three negroes, and without any refinement of

torture, it is, of course, comprehensible in a young society, though not excusable. But that poor wretches, accused of some crime, and whose innocence or culpability must soon be pronounced by a jury, should be dragged from prison by the populace, and executed with perfect impunity,—this is something which surpasses comprehension, even in a country where one is apt to be surprised at nothing.

And this is not all.

Lynch law has its humours, as the Westerners express it in the cynical language which is so natural to them: it is when there has been a mistake made —in the victim, and the whole thing has to be gone over again, because the wrong man has been lynched.

Again I leave an American newspaper, the *Chicago Herald*, to speak:

"The little town of St. Helens is in a ferment. A party of lynchers entered it this morning, and went straight to the house of Mrs. Williams to apprise her that her husband had been lynched by mistake during the night. After having expressed their regrets, the men left to go in search of the real culprit. We do not attempt to describe the anguish of the poor woman. It is feared she will lose her reason."

This took place in the year of disgrace 1888.

Lynch law has often had salutary results.

In the days of the "Gold fever," in California, San Francisco was overrun by scoundrelism of the

most virulent type. Twice was the infant city reduced to ashes by incendiary hands. Then the leading citizens rose in their wrath, banded themselves together in the name of a Vigilance Committee, and soon, from every available lamp-post, dangled the body of a ruffian. By such treatment was the city purged of crime.

A few years since an Irish agitator named Kearney preached the gospel of dynamite and the spoliation of the rich, on an open space, known as Sand Lots. As vast crowds assembled to listen to this incendiary doctrine, a new Vigilance Committee was formed, comprising all the leading bankers, merchants, and professional men. A polite note was sent to Mr. Kearney that if he ventured to speak again on the Sand Lots, he would be most accurately strung up there and then. Whereupon the Irish gentleman disappeared into space, and his present address is unknown.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

*A Word on Marriage and Divorce.—Scenes for an Opera-Bouffe.—An Amateur Dentist.*

AS I have said elsewhere, each State of the Union makes its own laws. The result is, that a thing which is legal in one State is not necessarily legal in the others.

The most curious, and those which differ most, are the laws upon marriage and divorce.

If it is easy to get married in the United States, it is still more easy to get unmarried.

In the State of New York, for instance, if you go to a hotel with a woman, and inscribe *Mr. and Mrs. so and so* on the register, the Law looks upon you as legally married to that woman, but the marriage is not recognised as valid in some other States. To obtain a divorce in the State of New York, you must prove infidelity on the part of your wife; but just across the Hudson, in the State of New Jersey, it is to be obtained on a proof of cruelty or incompatibility of character. If this is not easy enough for you, take the train to Chicago, where divorce is to be had for the asking almost.

The Court of Divorce in Chicago, called by the Americans the "divorce mill," decided 681 cases during the year 1887.

This institution is just as flourishing in the State

of Indiana as in Illinois. The Easterners jokingly pretend that, as the train rolls into the capital of Indiana, the porters cry out: "Indianopolis—twenty minutes for divorce!" so that couples who may have fallen out on the journey can part company for good.

Does the husband snore, or chew; has he disagreeable breath, or a clumsy manner of kissing his wife? does that lady wear false hair, give her tongue too free play, or habitually take up the newspaper as soon as her husband shows signs of dropping into sentiment? all these offences are serious ones before the aforesaid tribunals.

Without troubling to go and settle in Utah, an American may set up a seraglio of legitimate wives. Each lawful spouse might be a concubine outside the State she was married in; but by carefully studying the laws of the different States, Jonathan could, if he pleased, indulge in polygamy without fear of being prosecuted for it.

I have read in American papers divorce cases that were really very comic.

When a will has to be administered, matters often become very mixed up, as you may easily imagine. Who are the legitimate children? which are the bastards?

Of course all these confusions make work for the men of law, who naturally think American legislation the finest in the world.

The city of Chicago alone possesses seventeen hundred and sixty-eight lawyers, all thriving.

What a capital subject for an opera-bouffe might be got from some of those Chicago divorce cases! What merry *quid pro quos!* What amusing scenes! Choruses of lawyers; choruses of lawful wives, with the refrain:

"We are Mrs. Jonathan, tra la!"

The facility of marriage and divorce is comic, but it has its tragic side too.

There exist scoundrels, in America, who make a speculation of marriage.

One constantly hears of some poor girl having been persuaded into marrying an individual, who deserted her a few days after the ceremony. Her trinkets and little savings go with the absconding husband, needless to say.

Why seduce? says the scamp; it is much easier to marry the girl.

The forsaken one may console herself with the reflection that all is lost save honour.

It is certainly a consolation.

While I was in Michigan, the Detroit detectives were in search of a man who was claimed by seventeen wives, all *lawful*, robbed, and abandoned.

I extract from a Chicago paper the following evidence, full of originality and humour. The plaintiff is at the bar, being examined:

"What is your husband's occupation?" asked counsel.

"Habitual drunkenness, sir."

"I refer to your husband's profession."

"He made cigars."

"Good cigars?"

"Occasionally."

"Had not your husband any other profession? Did he not practise as a dentist?"

"Not professionally."

"Now, did not your husband extract six of your teeth?"

The plaintiff glanced timidly round to see if her husband was within hearing, and timidly said:

"He did."

"Did he administer gas, or ether, or any anæsthetics?"

"No, sir."

"Did he extract the teeth one after the other?"

"No, all together."

"Had your husband a license to practise as a dentist?"

"Not that I know of. One day he said to me: 'I will allow you a dollar a day. Bring me the accounts every week; and if ever I find a cent missing, I will knock your teeth out.'"

"Did he find any deficit in your accounts?"

"One Saturday night I could not balance the books. I was thirteen cents short. Without a word, my husband struck me in the mouth. Six of my teeth were knocked out; I swallowed two."

"Have you the other four in court?"

"Yes, sir."

And so forth.

The divorce was granted.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

*Mr. Grover Cleveland, President of the United States.—A Public Reception at the White House.—A Private Audience.—Why a Yankee Refrained from Accompanying Me.—What the President Costs the Nation.—Mrs. Cleveland.—Her Popularity.—Life at the White House.*

THE President is the most accessible citizen of the great Republic of the New World. Three times a week, he descends to the ground floor drawing-room, and passes an hour shaking hands with all who wish to make his acquaintance. There cannot be a man in the world who does so much hand-shaking as this President of the United States. You enter the White House at the hour of the public reception, as you enter a church at service time. I saw three negroes, market women, who had left their baskets in the antechamber; all sorts and conditions of men. It is the most democratic sight imaginable. Each person passes to the front in his turn.

"I am glad to see you, Mr. President. I hope both Mrs. Cleveland and yourself are well." Then the next one's turn comes, and so on.

Thanks to an amiable letter of introduction, which our esteemed Minister, M. Roustan, gave me for Colonel Lamont, the President's Secretary, I

easily obtained a private audience of Mr. Grover Cleveland.

Mr. Cleveland is a man of about fifty, tall, portly, powerful-looking, with quiet force and resolution written in every line of his face and figure. As you look at him, you say to yourself, "Here is a man with a cool head, and a pretty clear insight into human nature." His face is pleasant, has a sympathetic smile, and a kind look in the keen eyes. His bearing is full of natural dignity, without the least suspicion of haughtiness, and you are at your ease with him at once. The President is a born helmholder: a man with steady nerves, and a clear cool brain; withal a captain who has worked his way up from before the mast by indomitable energy and plodding.

In the ten minutes that our interview lasted, he managed to say many amiable things of France, and was most cordial in wishing me a pleasant sojourn in the States. I left the library, where the President had received me, greatly impressed with the simplicity with which things are done at the White House. It was a revelation. Here was the chief of executive power, the Sovereign, so to speak, of a great people, certainly of the greatest nation of the future, receiving without more ceremony than the plainest private individual. And I thought of the kind of reception an ordinary English ratepayer would meet with, who would take the liberty of asking for an interview with one of the legion of German princelings to whom John Bull gives out-

door relief. The very lacquey at the door would wonder how far the audacity of the common herd can go.

After my interview, a little incident occurred, which was, I thought, very American. I had gone to the White House with an American gentleman, who sat in the carriage we had driven in, while I went to present my respects to Mr. Grover Cleveland.

"Why did you not come up and see the President with me?" I asked when I rejoined him.

"Why?" he said; "simply because I pay the President to work and not to talk. Is it likely I should go and disturb him? It is quite enough for him to have to spend time over the visitors to Washington."

In truth, the President is paid to work.

His pay is 50,000 dollars, about £10,000 a year, and all the expenses of the White House come out of his pocket. Mr. Cleveland works from twelve to fourteen hours a day. He is the most active and hard-working man of a hard-working nation. For the enormous amount of work he undertakes, the President of the United States costs Jonathan half the sum of money John Bull pays the Viceroy of Ireland to open a few bazaars, and imprison a few Irish patriots. No king, no queen, no princes, no dukes, no chamberlains, no palace watch-dogs of any kind.

Happy country whose executive power costs her but a few thousand pounds, and whose rulers

are recruited from the intelligent plodders of the nation!

Mr. Cleveland, already respected and looked up to, three years ago, for his talents, his zeal, and his integrity, has seen his popularity grow greater every day since he united his destiny with that of the most charming of America's daughters.

Mrs. Cleveland is a lady of scarcely five-and-twenty summers, whose beauty has been so often described that it would be tedious to dwell longer on the subject. She is lovely, simply lovely. Whether Republicans or Democrats, all the Americans look upon Mrs. Cleveland with the eyes of the President.

I remember having one day seen, in a comic paper, a caricature representing Mrs Cleveland bringing back her husband on her shoulders to the White House. A caricature has no value, except when founded upon reality. At this time, everyone was unanimous in saying that, if Mr. Cleveland were re-elected President, he would in a large measure owe the honour to his wife.

Send a President home to his own fireside, is a thing the Americans do, with few exceptions, every four years; but send away from the White House a pretty woman who, for three years, has done the honours of it with as much tact as grace,—the Americans are gallant, and had to think twice about doing that. Many an American threw a "Cleveland" into the electoral urn for the sake of the bright eyes of the pretty *Présidente*.

The manner in which Mrs. Cleveland has filled the position of mistress of the White House was constantly being spoken of with glowing praise, in newspapers and in private circles, during my stay in America. In truth, it is no small thing for a young woman of twenty-two, with no special education or training for such a position, to be able, from the first day she stands, if not "in the fierce light that beats about a throne," yet in a glare of publicity, to display such tact and charm as to win praise from every tongue.

But the way in which Mrs. Cleveland has filled the position of first lady of the land is an illustration of the remarkable adaptibility of American women generally. In this, Jonathan's daughters resemble the women of my own country. This inborn talent does not only exist in good society, but even among the lower-middle classes. Put a little French seamstress in a drawing-room full of well-bred people, and at the end of an hour, in her walk, and talk, and behaviour, you will not know her from a lady. In the Americans and French there is suppleness. The English keep the marks of the mould their childhood is formed in, and with difficulty take other impressions.

The White House is a two-storied mansion, very unpretentious, standing in pretty grounds. It is as simple within as without; not the abode of luxury and display, but the abode of work.

Life at the White House is very homely.

Breakfast is served at nine, and generally consists of half a dozen dishes, such as any American with a sound appetite would order at a good hotel. The President takes coffee with his morning meal, while the young mistress of the house prefers tea.

At half-past one the President returns from the Capitol, where he has passed four hours hard at work, and luncheon is served. A dish of game or poultry, ham, pastry, such is generally the bill of fare.

On Sundays, luncheon is a cold repast, and served in the simplest and quickest way, so as to give the servants as much free time and as little work as possible.

Dinner is served at half-past six, and usually lasts but half an hour. The President drinks wine, but sparingly, and Mrs. Cleveland never touches anything stronger than Apollinaris water.

The steward buys what he thinks will please the palates of the master and mistress of the Executive Mansion, but has no orders. He has to cater for easily-pleased tastes, and the bill of fare invariably gives satisfaction.

Whether guests are present or not, the President is served first. Perhaps Louis XIV. might have refused to be served before the ladies; but Mr. Cleveland has so many qualities which the *grand monarque* did not possess, that it would be very ungenerous indeed to dwell on such an insignificant detail. After all, it is not Mr. Cleveland that is served first, but the first magistrate of America. The politeness is one done to the nation.

Mrs. Cleveland calls her husband "Mr. President." Her own name is Frances Folsom, which, it is said, her husband shortens into "Frank" in private. There appears to be no etiquette established on this subject. Martha Washington called the founder of the great American Republic "General." Mrs. Hayes called the President "Mr. Hayes," whilst Mrs. Lincoln and Mrs. Garfield called their respective husbands "Abram" and "Jim."

## CHAPTER XXIX.

*Politics.—Parties.—The Gentleman and the Politician.—"Honest John" and "Jolly Roger."—The Irish in America.—Why the Americans are in Favour of Home Rule.—The Mayor of New York and the Green Flag.—The German Yankees.—The American Constitution and the President.—Executive and Legislative Powers.—England is a Freer Country than America.—The Elections.—An Anecdote of M. Jules Grévy.*

IN America the pursuit of politics is a liberal profession—very liberal for those who take it up.

In America, as in England, there are two great political parties; instead of being called Conservatives and Liberals, they are called Republicans and Democrats. The difference which exists between these parties is this: One is in power, and tries to stay in; the other is out, and tries to get in.

All that is done by the one is condemned in advance by the other, whichever the other may be. It is *parti-otism.*

Good society keeps prudently aloof from politics and politicians. When a servant announces a politician, his master whispers in his ear: "John, lock up the plate, and take care there is nothing lying

about."* John, faithful to orders, stands sentinel in the hall, and, while he is showing out the politician, keeps an eye on the umbrellas and overcoats.

For that matter, the American democracy is no exception to the rule. To become a chemist, you must study chemistry; to become a lawyer, you must study law; but, in a democracy, to be a politician you need only study your interests. Enlightened, educated, well-bred Americans have no desire to be confounded with the heroes of the Stump, and stand back; the rich financiers and merchants are too busy to take up politics; the senators and congressmen are more or less the chosen of the common people, and good society says: "No, thank you; I prefer to stay at home." Thus it is that the ground remains clear for the noisy mediocrities, and that a gentleman has only to mix himself up in politics to become a *déclassé*. He must reach the White House to inspire a little respect. The American gentleman has not the least ambition to see his fair name dragged in the mud; to hear himself called "thief," or nicknamed "Honest John," "Jolly Roger," or what not. He takes a joke as well as another; but if you were to call him "Senator" or "Congressman," he would have you up for defamation of character. The President himself, capable and upright as he is, does not altogether escape the contempt which the politician inspires in the man of refinement.

When I was asked, in America, what celebrities

* I once made this statement before a London audience. An Englishman was heard to remark to his neighbour: "Is this a fact I wonder?"

I had met, I generally answered: "First of all, I have had the honour of paying my respects to your President." I invariably missed my effect. "Ah, really!" people would say—"but, there, you are a foreigner." This was an excuse, I suppose; for the Americans did not shut their doors upon me.

Contemporary America is governed by the Irish. The Germans, the Scandinavians, all those crowds of foreigners that, year by year, flock to the New World to find a livelihood, and which America gradually assimilates, go West to fell forests and reclaim the land. But the Irish pitch their tents, for the most part, in the large cities, where they congregate together and turn their attention to politics. The city of New York, for instance, which has been successively conquered by the Dutch, the English, and the Yankees, is to-day in the hands of the Irish. New York is the real capital of Ireland.

I was in America on the 17th of March, St. Patrick's Day. I remember that the Irish demanded to have the day officially celebrated in New York, and the Mayor was requested to hoist the green flag over the City Hall. This gentleman, for refusing to comply, was next day pronounced a "false patriot" and a "traitor."

The English are always wondering why Americans all seem to be in favour of Home Rule, and ready to back up the cause with their dollars. Why? I will tell you. Because they are in hopes that, when the Irish get Ireland, they will all go home.

I, too, would like to see the Irish in possession of Ireland, but for other reasons. First and chiefly, because they are good patriots, and, though in a foreign land, even naturalized Americans, they do not forget their beloved country. Americans though they be in their new home, they yet remain Irish. They give their allegiance to America; but their hearts remain true to Ireland.

What a contrast to the Germans whom you find in the United States! These forget their mother-tongue, and their children do not speak it. They abuse their country.

Wherever the German settles he becomes "native." He is not a colonizer: he adopts at the outset the customs, creed, and language of his new Fatherland: I believe he would become a nigger in Africa. But this has always been his wont. When the Germanic hordes invaded Gaul in the fifth century, they became Gauls in a very little time: spoke Latin, and, thanks be, only left in our language about five hundred words of Teutonic origin.

How can one help wishing that they may one day return to their country, those Irish, who, a thousand leagues from Ireland, remain Irish still? How can one help loving them, those brave sons of Erin, so amiable and witty?

I have many times been asked why, having written on the subject of England and Scotland, I had no intention of publishing my impressions of the Irish.

My answer is this: in speaking of a people, I

like to touch on their pet transgressions, their faults and weaknesses, and I have never been able to find any in the Irish.

You will understand now why I would not risk the little reputation I may have made, and write of the Irish.

Upon the strength of a six months' sojourn in America, one would hardly attempt to deliver a verdict on the political system of the country.

I think, however, that it may safely be affirmed that the English are a freer people than the Americans; that the constitutional—I had almost said republican—monarchy of England is preferable to the authoritative democracy of America.

The American Constitution was copied from that of the England of 1776, and the President of the United States was invested with a power about equal to that of George III. Since that date the English have advanced, but the Americans have not. Now, in these cases, not to advance is to go back. The English of the year of grace 1888 would soon give their queen notice to quit, if she took it into her head to ask for power equal to that possessed by the President of the United States: it would take less time, perhaps, than the Americans would need to get rid of a troublesome President.

For four years the Americans are at the mercy of their chief representatives. Scarcely have the latter gone through their apprenticeship in the science of politics and government, when they have to go home.

The consequence is, that there are but novices: politicians, but no statesmen. These small politicians excite the interest of the public so little, that the American newspapers furnish their readers with many more details about what is said at Westminster, at the Palais Bourbon, and at the Reichstag, than about what is being done at the Capitol in Washington.

Reforms are constantly talked of in America, but how obtain them? Public opinion has but a secondary influence upon the Government. The English would obtain a constitutional reform in much less time than the Americans. In England, all officials are the servants of the public; in America, they are their masters. The English Parliament is constantly influenced by public opinion; the American Congress is not so influenced at all, and the people's representatives rarely give account to their electors of the way in which they have acquitted themselves of their charge.

There is not one out of a thousand educated Americans, there is not one honest newspaper, that does not demand the immediate passing of the Copyright Bill; yet Congress turns a deaf ear to the wishes of the people with perfect impunity. This is one example among a hundred.

During four years the President has almost *carte blanche*. He can declare war and stop legislation. Mr. Glover Cleveland has already vetoed 120 bills. An authoritative democracy like this seems to present all the dangers of an absolute monarchy, without possessing, as a compensation, the advantages of fixity.

The position of this President is very curious. Imagine to yourself a king who, after four years' service, disappears into the obscurity of private life, is no more heard of than a late Lord Mayor unless he has been assassinated, and whose very features are forgotten, unless they have been perpetuated upon dollar bills and postage stamps.

The Presidential election, which takes place every fourth year, is the most feverish phase of the feverish American life. The whole nation becomes delirious. Several months before the day fixed, every mind is preoccupied with but one thing, the election. The newspapers are full of it; conversation has no other subject. Passions are let loose; intrigues are on foot; the most odious calumnies are circulated; men stop at nothing that may give the victory to their party. For three or four weeks prior to the election, the country is given over to processions, meetings, banners, stump speeches, torch-light marches. As soon as Fate has decided between the candidates, calm is restored, the fray ceases, arms are extended only in hand-shakings, the vanquished accept their defeat with as much bravery as they had displayed in the struggle, and everyone goes once more about his business.

The United States well deserve their name. The Union is a true and firm one. It reposes on contentment. It is composed of over thirty republics, *republicæ in Republica*. Each State has its governor and its two Houses of Legislature; that is to say,

each governs itself in its own fashion. For instance, in certain States you cannot obtain a divorce except from an unfaithful wife; in another, you can obtain it by proving that your wife habitually has your chops served overdone. In one State, the law does not punish drunkenness as an offence; in another, the sale of alcoholic drinks is completely interdicted. The American States, all managing their own local government as they each see fit, live in perfect harmony one with another. That which makes the strength of America is, that everyone seems satisfied with the form of government.

I said just now that America possessed no great political orator or statesman, and that what went on at Washington scarcely awoke any interest in the people; but are not great political orators generally evoked by great public wrongs? Are not also sometimes great public wrongs evoked by great political orators? And when a nation lives in happiness and complete security, must not its politics necessarily be uninteresting? Happy the nation whose politics do not furnish the foreign press with sensational news!

I said also that I considered the people of England freer than the people of America. This demands an explanation. In advancing such an opinion, I mean to say that the English exercise more influence over the Government than do the Americans, and that they invest the agents of authority with much smaller powers. An American policeman, for in

stance, is endowed with an authority which he can with impunity use in tyrannous fashion. The English policeman is the servant of the public; is responsible before the public for his acts; may be given in charge on the spot if he insults or roughly handles you; and may be prosecuted for making a false accusation against you.

Bureaucracy is much more tyrannical in America than in England. You meet at every turn with a man who lets you know that he has "certain instructions to carry out." You soon know what that means in a country where there are *avec le ciel des accommodements*. You get out of the difficulty by the aid of that irresistible argument, named "the dollar." In the trains, for instance, I have known the conductor refuse me permission to occupy a vacant bed by the side of my own, and which pleased me better than the one that had been assigned to me. "Your ticket bears a certain number, and I can't change it; I must carry out instructions." Useless to try and make him understand that the bed, being disengaged, it matters little to the company whether you occupy it or not. Orders must be obeyed. You pull a half-dollar piece out of your pocket, and the difficulty is surmounted. Regulations only come into existence to be trampled on as occasion requires.

The English have the habit of making themselves at home everywhere, but, above all, in places where they pay. Nothing is so repugnant to them as those thousand and one little tyrannies that go by the

names of regulations, restrictions, rules, by-laws, etc. If you would be unhampered by such, if you would enjoy perfect freedom, live in England.

No one doubts that England is the freest country on earth, not even our staunchest French republicans.

A few months before his election to the presidency of the French Republic, M. Jules Grévy was present one evening at a political dinner in the beautiful mansion of the Vicomtesse de Rainneville. At this epoch, things scarcely seemed to point to the future elevation of M. Grévy; and as M. de Grandlieu, who told the anecdote in the *Figaro*, maliciously said, if the Orleans Princes had displayed a little more resolution, M. Grévy would probably never have known any other palace than the one in which his pleadings failed to awaken the judges.

After dinner, in the elegant smoking-room, one of the guests drew M. Grévy aside, and said to him:

"Well, sir, seeing the turn things are taking, have you not enough of the Republic?"

"On the contrary, I have just returned from a country where I have learned to appreciate it more."

"Where is it you have been? to Switzerland?"

"No, a little further."

"Not America?"

"Oh, no."

"In what country can you have strengthened so much your Republican ideas?"

"I have just returned from England!" replied M. Grévy.

## CHAPTER XXX.

*The Ordinary American.—His Voice, his Habits, his Conversation.—He Murders his Language and your Ears.—Do not judge him too quickly.*

NOTHING is ordinary in America.

The ordinary American himself is extraordinarily ordinary.

He takes liberties with his fellow-creatures, and with the English grammar. He murders your ears, and the mother-tongue of Shakespeare. He chews, hawks, and spits; but he has a certain good-humoured brag and liveliness about him which invite further acquaintance.

His fingers, cravat, and shirt-front sparkle with diamonds.

In conversation, he attacks all subjects imaginable with complete assurance. He talks tall, and through the nose. He does not raise his voice much. He buzzes rather than speaks: at a certain distance you think you hear the droning of bagpipes.

Meeting you in a railway-carriage, he will ask you point-blank where you are going, what you are doing, and where you come from. By degrees he grows bolder, and, if the fancy takes him, he will touch the cloth of your coat, and ask you, "What did you give for that?" He has not the least inten-

tion of being disagreeable. This is not an act of rudeness, but one of good fellowship. He, on his part, will give you all the information you care to have about himself. He takes it for granted that you are as inquisitive as he is, and he is ready to satisfy your curiosity. He is obliging.

This man, whom you began by taking for some ignorant babbler, presently gives to his conversation a turn that astonishes you. He speaks to you of France in a way which shows you that he is conversant with all that is going on there. The sayings and doings of General "Bolangère" are familiar to him. He knows the names of the chief members of the Ministry. He is interested in M. Pasteur's researches; he has read a review of M. Renan's last book, and of M. Sardou's latest play. He has judicious remarks to make upon literature. He knows his Shakespeare, as not one Frenchman of his class knows Corneille, Racine, Molière, or Victor Hugo. You discover that he is well-read, this man who says *I come* for *I came, you was, you didn't ought, I don't know as I do*, etc. He can give you information about his country as useful as it is exact.

He talks politics—even foreign politics—like a man of sense. He is far more enlightened on the Irish question than most people are in England. The ordinary Englishman is Conservative or Liberal without knowing very well why—generally because his father was, or is, the one or the other. Ask him why the Irish have been complaining for centuries of the way the English govern them, he can rarely

give you anything but commonplaces in reply: "We conquered them, they ought to obey us;" or, "We cannot allow the Irish to dismember the United Kingdom," as if unity did not consist in living in harmony, as if the Union of the United States was in danger because each State governs itself in its own fashion. I must say the ordinary Englishman, who is in favour of Home Rule for Ireland, does not base his opinion upon arguments more serious or more solid: "Mr. Gladstone says it is right;" he does not go much deeper than that. Neither knows the history of Ireland, or the origin of the land tenure in that unhappy country.

This same American talks theology. He discusses the Bible. He reads the writings of Colonel Ingersoll, refuting that gentleman's ideas or accepting his conclusions.

In a word, you thought you were in the company of an ignorant bore of a bagman, and you have had one or two hours' talk with an intelligent and interesting man.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

*American Activity.—Expression of the Faces.—Press the Button, S.V.P.—Marketing in the House.—Magic Tables.—The Digestive Apparatus in Danger.—Gentlemen of Leisure.—Labour Laws.—A Six Days' Journey to go to a Banquet.—My Manager cuts out Work for me.—A Journalist on a Journey.—"Don't wait dinner, am off to Europe."*

WHAT which strikes the European most in his first walk through New York streets is the absence of stupid faces. All are not handsome, but all are intelligent-looking and full of life. The next thing that strikes him is the well-grown look of the people. Few or no deformities. He does not see one halt or hunchbacked person out of the ten thousand he may meet. With the exception of the old people, few have defective sight. Apart from the complexion, which is pale, everything seems to indicate an active, strong, healthy people. The constant crossing of races must daily tend to the improving of the Americans, physically and intellectually.

You see so many thin men and so many stout women, that you almost immediately conclude that the former live in a furnace of activity, and the latter in cotton-wool. This impression grows upon you, and soon takes the form of a conviction.

The Americans do not walk much. It is not that

they are indolent. Far from it. It is because their legs will not carry them fast enough.

The faces of the men you meet look absorbed in thought. Their hats are well down on their heads. This, again, is a sign of intelligence. Do not smile. The fool perches his hat on his head, the man with a well-filled brain puts his head into its covering.

These same faces are pale, and you see many prematurely grey heads. The want of open-air exercise, the dryness of the atmosphere, the suffocating heat of the rooms, the vitiated air in the houses which seem to have windows only for the purpose of letting in a little light, easily explain this double phenomenon.

The women of every country are unanimous—in pronouncing the American men handsome; and as there are few men who do not think the American women lovely, there can be but one opinion on the subject: the American race is a good-looking one. But that which makes the charm of the men's faces is not regularity of feature; it is, as I have already said, the intelligence written on them, the wonderful, the amazing activity that animates them.

This activity you find in all stations of society, in the financial world, the literary world, the world of politics, everywhere. It is a fever with which the whole nation is smitten.

In the eyes of the worthy, peaceful Frenchman who has not travelled, an American is a lunatic who does nothing like other people. After all, eccentri-

city is but an exaggerated form of activity; but for certain people with narrow ideas, eccentricity and madness are but one and the same thing.

Let us take a little look at Americans at home, and see if I was wrong in calling American life pure phantasmagoria.

We will begin by the private houses.

In a well-appointed house, you will find, in a little room on the ground-floor, a plaque fitted with several buttons. You touch the first, and immediately a cab drives up to your door.* You touch the second, and in a minute or two, there appears a messenger from the telegraph office to take your telegram or carry a parcel or message for you to any part of the city. You touch the third, and a policeman presents himself, as if by enchantment, to know if you suspect the presence of burglars. You touch the fourth, and heigh, presto! up dashes the fire brigade, with engine, fire-escape, and the rest of their life-saving apparatus, and this in about the length of time that it took Cinderella's godmother to turn the pumpkin into a coach.

Jonathan will not stop here. Before long we shall see the architects of all first-class houses laying on, not only gas, water, the telephone and the electric light, but the opera and church service.

Already the ladies of Chicago do their marketing at home. The housekeeper goes to her telephone and rings.

* If you press it twice, it is a two-horse cab that comes.

"Hello!" responds the central office.

"Put me in communication with 2438"—(her butcher's number).

In another instant the bell rings.

"Hello!"

"Hello!"

"Is it the butcher?"

"Yes."

"Send me two pounds of fillet of beef, and a leg of mutton, by twelve o'clock."

"Very good! Is that all?"

"Yes."

"All right."

Upon this the lady rings again.

"Hello!" from central office, where this kind of thing goes on all day long.

"Send me 1267" (the fruiterer).

Again the bell rings.

"Hello!"

"Hello!"

"Is it the fruiterer?"

"Yes."

And the scene is repeated—and so on with the baker, the grocer, and all the lady's tradespeople.

We have all seen the wonderful labour-saving, time-saving apparatus of American invention which has suppressed the cry of "Cash here!" in most large shops in England, as well as America. To watch the ball containing your bill and coin drawn up, to see it run along one inclined groove, and return on another, bringing your change and the bill re-

ceipted, is to look on at another piece of American legerdemain.

There is a great effort being made now in New York, Chicago, and other towns, to find out a plan to accelerate the service in restaurants and do away with waiters. It is very simple and the Americans will not be baffled for such a small matter.

This is how the thing is to be done :

The restaurant is provided with small numbered tables. Each table is in direct communication with the kitchen by means of rails. Close at hand are a certain number of electric buttons upon which the customer sees written *beef, mutton, chop, vegetables, tart, etc.* He touches three, four, five buttons, according to his appetite, and the cook receives his order.

"Steak and potatoes, tomato, salad, chocolate cream, for No. 52 ! . . . All right, ready !"

In an instant a tray bearing the lunch appears upon the table, placed there without hands. When the customer has disposed of his food, he touches the button marked *bill.* In a twinkling the bill appears on his plate, and the assuaged American settles it at the desk as he goes out. The whole thing is as simple as *bonjour.*

The American complains that it is impossible to lunch in less than ten minutes. This evil will be remedied shortly.

If you want a really striking sight, go to one of the great restaurants of Chicago or New York at

lunch time. Those Americans using their knife and fork will make your head swim. At a little distance, they look as if they were all playing the dulcimer.

I lunched one day at the Astor House, near the heart of the Stock Exchange furnace of New York. I was standing at the bar making all the speed possible with my food, so as to give place to the crowd pressing behind me. All the time I heard such remarks as:

"There's one that isn't in a hurry! How much longer is he going to be? Is he going to take an hour over his grub?"

You eat too fast, my dear Jonathan, and I understand why your anti-dyspeptic pill makers cover your walls with their advertisements. You die young; and you do not live, you burn out. You rush on at express speed, in your chase after the dollar, and you have not time to look at Happiness, standing with open arms at your door. Your very evenings are not your own. Hardly have you taken upon your knees one of your lovely little ones to kiss and caress, hardly have you begun a little love-scene with your pretty wife, when, ding, ding, ding, there is the telephone going.

"Hello! Hello!"

Your wife and children would fain see the telephone thrown to the winds, for you are a gallant husband and a charming father.

The little French provincial shopkeeper, who locks his shop-door, from twelve to one o'clock, while he dines with his family, has come nearer than

you to solving the problem of life, *How to be happy*. Sharper and Co. may suspend payment, without the fact interfering with his digestion. Twice a year he goes and takes up his three per cent. dividend on the Government Stock. It is petty, perhaps; but it is secure, and he can sleep upon both ears.

Those Americans are never still, never at rest. Even when they are sitting they must be on the move; witness the rocking-chair habit.

No repose for them: their life is perpetual motion, a frantic race.

Opposite my windows, at the Richelieu Hotel in Chicago, there was a railway station. Every ten minutes the local trains came and went. Each time the bell announced the approach of a train, I saw a crowd tear along the path of the station, and leap into the carriages, taking them by storm. By leaving their offices thirty seconds earlier, these good people might have walked comfortably to the station and saved themselves this breathless chase.

Go to the Brooklyn Bridge station, New York, about five o'clock in the afternoon. There you will see a sight very like the storming of a fort.

An American wrote me one day a note of a few lines, and thus excused himself for his brevity: "A word in haste—I have hardly time to wink." Poor fellow! only think of it, not even time to wink; it makes one giddy.

But it must be acknowledged that this feverish activity has made America what she is. Yesterday

forest and swamp, to-day towns of five, ten thousand souls, with churches, free libraries, free schools, newspapers; towns where people work, think, read, pray, make fortunes, go bankrupt, etc.

Very few Americans are content to live on their private means. There is no leisure class, there are no unemployed. Rich and poor, old and young, all work. They die in harness, harnessed to the car of Mammon. A millionaire on his death-bed says to his son: "I leave you my fortune on the express condition that you work." General Daniel Butterfield expressed the feeling of most American fathers when he said on some public occasion: "If I had ten sons I would not give them a cent until they had learned to earn their own living, though I were ten times a millionaire."

Mr. Whitelaw Reid, editor of the New York *Tribune*, Mr. Madill, of the Chicago *Tribune*, and several other editors I could mention, are millionaires. You will invariably find them at their desks until one in the morning. They work like simple supernumeraries.

Outside certain Anglo-maniac sets, to be found in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, no one boasts of living on his property.

In England, a man who does nothing goes by the name of *gentleman;* in Chicago he goes by the name of *loafer*.

In fifty years' time, when America has two hundred million inhabitants, perhaps she will impose her ideas upon the Old World. Then, maybe, society

will have no contempt except for the ignorant and the idle.

A young man, with a very intelligent-looking face, was pointed out to me one evening, in a Chicago drawing-room.

"He is very rich," said my hostess to me softly. "For a year or two after he inherited the property he did no work, and people began to rather shun him. But he has just gone into partnership with a friend in business, and so he is quite reinstated in everyone's esteem."

I know Americans of both sexes who, rather than lead an idle life, have taken to the stage. These actors and actresses belong to good society, which admires them in public and welcomes them in private. Such things do honour to the national spirit, and raise the dramatic profession in the eyes of the public. Why should not all actresses be as respected and respectable as singers or pianists?

Not only is work respectable in America, but in certain States it is compulsory. In the State of Missouri, for instance, any idle improvident fellow who neglects his family or, through shiftless habits, is likely to become a burden to the State, may be sold at auction to the highest bidder for a term of six months. This is a law passed twenty years ago. It provides also, that after the vagrant has worked out the purchase-money, any other sum earned by him, at a fair compensation, is to be applied by his purchaser to the payment of his debts, or the main-

tenance of his family. If, when he is free again, he returns to his bad habits, his fellow-townsmen take the law into their own hands. They escort him to some public place and flog him; and if that does not cure him, his wife runs the risk of seeing him one fine day hanging from some neighbouring tree. The people will tell you, as the most simple thing in the world, that by acting thus they economise the cost of a police force. Rather primitive this reason, it must be admitted; but in new societies, idleness is a crime, and the bees ought to have a right to drive the drones out of the hive.

Jonathan is but John Bull expanded—John Bull with plenty of elbow-room, and nothing astonishes him, nothing stops him.

Distances, he takes no account of: for him they do not exist. At the annual dinner of the Clover Club, at Philadelphia, seated opposite me was the editor of one of the large Chicago newspapers. He had come from Chicago to Philadelphia to be present at the banquet. After all, it is but a twenty-four hours' journey. That's all. I could not help making a remark on the subject to my neighbour at table.

"There's nothing at all astonishing about it," said he. "You see that bald gentleman with a long white beard over there? Well, he has come from San Francisco."

A piece of canvas-back duck, at that moment in my throat, nearly choked me.

"Excuse me," I said to my neighbour, "I have only been in America three months. . . . I shall get used to it—I shall get used to it."

And, indeed, it was very necessary to get used to it.

I was looking one day at the list of engagements which my manager had just sent me for the following week. To my stupefaction I read:

"Monday, New York.

"Tuesday, Youngstown (Ohio).

"Wednesday, Indianapolis."

I ran to the office of this imperturbable Yankee, and asked him:

"Is it possible that I can reach these towns, so far apart, in time to give my lectures?"

"Nothing easier," he replied, seizing the railway guide. "Your New York lecture comes off at three in the afternoon. At five, you have a train which gets to Youngstown by noon next day. There you lecture at eight. Pay your bill and send your luggage to the station before going to the Academy of Music, where you have to speak. As soon as your lecture is over, jump into a cab, and you will catch the ten o'clock train, which will set you down at Indianapolis in time for your next day's engagement."

"What! go to the train in evening dress?" I exclaimed.

"And why not? You undress in the sleeping-car, I suppose?"

"What a life!" thought I. "These Yankees beat everything."

Oh, that map of the United States! If you would have any idea of a good lecturing tour in America, just imagine yourself appearing in public one day in London, the next in Paris, the day after in Berlin, then in Vienna, St. Petersburgh, and Constantinople to finish up the week. Then take Teheran, and the chief cities in Asia, and you have a fair idea of the journeys.

Here is a little scene of American life. It was told me, not only without boast, but as the most natural thing in the world, by Mr. L. S. Metcalf, the editor of the *Forum*, one of the most important Reviews of New York.

Mr. Metcalf wished to have an article on the subject of the Mormons for his Review: not one of those papers written by a man who had passed through Utah, but a serious study. For several weeks he had been in correspondence with one of the elders of the Mormon Church.

"All this letter-writing does not advance matters much," thought Mr. Metcalf to himself one day; "one or two hours' conversation would settle the thing."

Two hours later he was in the train for Salt Lake City. He probably reckoned this way: "It is only five days' journey in the cars, and what is that when one sets against it a good talk in the interest of the Review?"

Mr. Metcalf set out, arrived, saw, had his chat, took the cars again, and came home.

"But," I timidly advanced, "what became of the Review during all this time?"

"Oh, it suffered nothing from my absence," said its editor; "I installed myself at the table in the library-car, where I was able to carry on my work at my ease. When we stopped at the stations, I posted my letters, and sent and received telegrams with as little difficulty as in New York."

"But could you really work easily in the train?"

"Better, much better, than at my own desk, my dear sir; there was no one to come and disturb me."

I was one day relating this conversation to an American journalist.

"You are simply wonderful, you Americans," I said to him; "you would go to the Sandwich Islands to fetch news of the king at Honolulu."

"Just so," he replied—"I have done it."

This "I have done it" was the finishing touch.

A New Yorker sets out for San Francisco, as Parisians set out for Versailles or Chartres. He takes the Liverpool steamer, just as we take the little boat for Auteuil, without any more fuss, without any more preparation. Do not ask him whether he will return by the same line. Perhaps he will take it into his head to come home by China and Australia. His own country is larger than Europe itself; and France, England, Germany, Italy, Spain, even Russia,—all these names sound to his ear no more than Ohio, Pennsylvania, or any other American State.

One of my fellow-passengers, on my homeward

trip in the *Germanic*, was a New Yorker, who, on the morning of the day the boat was to sail, left home without the least intention of crossing the Atlantic. Having made up his mind at noon, he telegraphed to his wife, "Don't wait dinner, am off to Europe," bought a bag and a few necessaries for the voyage, and calmly embarked at 3.30 for Europe.

American wives are used to this sort of telegrams, and think nothing of it.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

*The "XIXth Century Club."—Intellectual Activity.—Literary Evenings.—Light Everywhere.*

TO show the point to which intellectual activity goes in America, I cannot do better than speak of the "XIXth Century Club."

Two or three years ago, Mr. Courtlandt Palmer,* one of the principal inhabitants of New York—a gentleman as rich in intellectual attainments as in dollars—conceived the happy idea of inviting his friends to meet twice a month in his drawing-room, for the purpose of discussing the important questions of the day. His invitation was accepted with alacrity; and thus the club, which consists of lady members as well as gentlemen, was formed.

Nothing is more interesting than these meetings; nothing, at all events, left a deeper or more pleasurable impression upon me than these intellectual treats. Papers upon some question—political, scientific, literary, or artistic—are read, and followed by debates.

The reunions were so much enjoyed that the number of the members soon increased rapidly, and

* It is with deep sorrow that I learn, while writing these lines, of the death of Mr. Courtlandt Palmer, to whom I owe many charming hours spent in New York.

it became necessary to hire a public room for their accommodation. So great is the present popularity of the club, and so great the demand for admission to membership, that every few months a larger room is needed to hold all these people eager to enlighten themselves on the questions of the day which interest the thinking world.

The association proceeds in a manner as simple as it is practical.

Is it decided to pass an evening in discussing Socialism, for instance? The President invites a well-known Socialist to come and explain his views before the members of the club; he invites also an anti-Socialist of talent to answer him.

The XIXth Century Club opens its doors, as the *North American Review* does its columns, to all new ideas anxious to pierce through to the light.

One evening, last winter, was devoted to the discussion of Sectarianism. The President of the Club invited a Catholic priest, an Episcopalian and a Presbyterian minister, a Unitarian and, unless my memory misleads me, an agnostic. All were listened to attentively, and each had his harvest of applause.

Another night, the subject chosen was, "The Triumph of Democracy." The first orator, Mr. Andrew Carnegie, set forth that everything is for the best in that best of Democracies, the American one. The second, on the contrary, brought forward much eloquence and many figures to prove that the governmental system of America was worthless and rotten.

Mr. Carnegie, having gone from Scotland to America with the traditional half-crown in his pocket, and, by his talents and industry, become one of the richest men in the United States, it was quite natural to see him standing up for the American institutions, and waxing eloquent over the superiority of America to the rest of the world.

Thanks to their vivacity of mind, the Americans have a special talent for making the most arid subjects interesting. All these debates are enlivened with humorous remarks, anecdotes, flashes of wit, and clever repartees. Needless to say that they are conducted with the utmost courtesy. The most trenchant weapons employed at these tournaments are sarcasm and banter, and the Americans are adept in the use of both.

In America, such is the respect for the opinions of others, that the wildest, most incongruous, ideas did not raise a murmur: the audience would smile and seem to say, "What a droll idea!" and if the droll idea was expressed wittily, the orator was applauded.

In the course of a debate upon "International Copyright," I remember hearing one American calmly express the opinion that authors have no right to their own ideas, and that therefore they have no right to any remuneration for their work. He developed this strange statement with a great deal of cleverness, and at the end of his discourse was greeted with a round of applause as hearty as it was ironical.

All this is highly amusing; but, at the same time, how edifying and interesting!

As soon as the debates are over, the audience repair to an adjoining room for refreshments, and to criticise the opinions advanced during the evening. The meeting turns into a conversazione, or a reception, at which the President's wife does the honours.

I saw nothing more striking during my stay in America—nothing which appeared to me more hopeful for the future of the country—than the sight of these crowds of four or five hundred people—old men and young, young girls and matrons, all in fashionable evening dress—met together to learn something, and to keep themselves posted up in all the new ideas of the day.

I have heard young ladies read papers of their own composition at these meetings, and their discourses were as clever as those of their gentlemen antagonists.

In New York alone, there exist many other societies of the same kind. Among others, I might name the "Twilight Club." The members meet twice a month for dinner. At dessert, instead of smoking-room or boudoir stories, some subject of general interest, decided upon by the President of the Club at the preceding meeting, is talked over, each member giving separately his own ideas on the subject under discussion. For the evening on which I had the pleasure of dining with the club, the chosen subject was, "Which are the books that have influenced you?" The evening at an end, it was decided

that the topic for the next meeting should be, "Which are the ideas that have helped you?"

I might name several other clubs, such as the "Drawing-room Club," the "Thursday Club."

In short, what strikes one is the all-pervading activity, the intellectual life led by women of good society as well as men.

Impossible that Truth should hide her face in a country where there is such a flood of light.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

*Climate Incites Jonathan to Activity.—Healthy Cold.—Why Drunkenness is Rare in America.—Do not Lose Sight of your Nose.—Advice to the Foreigner intending to Visit Jonathan in the Winter.—Visit to the Falls of Niagara.—Turkish Baths offered Gratis by Nature.*

IT is to the bright, bracing climate of North America that the activity, and consequent prosperity, of Jonathan is mainly to be attributed.

The dry, invigorating air induces activity, and you can do things in America which it would never enter your mind to attempt in Europe.

The cold in winter is excessive, but you do not suffer from it; for my part, I scarcely noticed it. It is a kind of cold which does not penetrate, and against which it is easy to protect oneself. It is dry, healthful, bracing, excites the circulation of the blood, and makes one feel full of life.

The air is charged with ozone and electricity. Several times, in touching the heating-pipes and gaseliers, I had tiny electric sparks flash from my finger-ends. In brushing your hair, you will often hear the crackling of the electric sparks produced by the friction of the brush.

The American sky is bright. It is never clouded for more than two or three days together. You live in a clear, smiling atmosphere, which sheds joy in

the heart. It is not wonderful that the Americans are so bright and lively. Man, everywhere, is influenced by the climate in which he lives.

Stimulants are not needed, water suffices; and few Americans drink anything but water at meal-time on ordinary occasions. Alcoholic drinks are almost forbidden by the climate. A bottle of wine goes to the head sooner in America than half a dozen would in England or France.

When I was in America, though it was winter-time (this includes the spring, which only exists in American almanacks), I was always thirsty; the dryness of the atmosphere made my tongue constantly feel like a grater. I quenched my thirst with water or an ice.

Drunkenness is not at all a national vice in America. On the contrary, it is rare even among the lower classes, and does not exist in the higher.

When a drunkard is picked up from the gutter, the passer-by says, "It is a European just come over."

I have often admired the sobriety of the Americans at great dinners, which are sometimes prolonged to the midnight hour. After dessert, no more wine. Bottles of mineral-waters are brought in, and the guests moisten their lips with Apollinaris, Vichy, or whichever sparkling water they prefer, while smoking and talking.

The air is so dry in the north of the States that, when heated at theatres, concerts, and balls, one

breathes with difficulty, and it often causes the breath to be disagreeable.

I repeat it, the cold is healthy; and the foreigner who visits America during the winter, only suffers from the suffocating heat of the rooms. With fur wraps, and the ears well covered, he has nothing to fear in the air, unless it be for his nose, which I would advise him to keep an eye upon.

If you go to America for the winter, take only autumn and summer costumes. It is not only the houses that are heated night and day to a temperature of nearly 80 degrees, but it is the trains as well. All carriages, cabs, and sleighs are provided with rugs and furs, and you have no use for winter clothes. In the private houses, hotels, and railways you will only be able to bear light clothing. All the winter comforts you will need are furs for out of doors.

The Americans, who cook themselves within doors, fear the cold so little when they are in motion that, in the States of Illinois, Wisconsin, Ohio, and others in the north, when the thermometer is down to 30 degrees below zero, they give the preference to open carriages. In Chicago, Buffalo, and Milwaukee one has almost a difficulty to find a covered sleigh or cab to go out in at night. It is the same in Canada. In Toronto, Ottowa, Montreal, and Quebec, nothing but open sleighs. The driver buries you in furs. Your feet and body are warm, and the cold that cuts your face seems to help to make your blood circulate, and is quite enjoyable.

I went to see Niagara Falls (the grandest spec-

tacle it was ever given to man to behold) in the early part of February. Without suffering from the cold, I was able to drive for three hours in an open sleigh through thickly snow-laden air. To have the snow beating in one's face so long, was not agreeable; but the storm added, if possible, to the grandeur of the scenery. On alighting at Prospect House, to take a cup of tea before beginning the train journey to Buffalo, I took off my wraps, and never have I felt such a glowing sense of warmth and life.

The frequent and very sudden changes of temperature in winter,* and the great difference between the temperature of the houses and that of the outer air,† is very trying to the foreigner.

An American to whom I was complaining of this one day, and who would not stand anything like criticism of his country, said:

"My dear sir, those changes are very healthful. They stir the blood, quicken circulation, and are as good as a Turkish bath."

* One day in November, 1887, the thermometer stood at 78 in Washington. Next day all the puddles in the gutters were frozen, and the mercury marked only 17 above zero, making a fall of 61 degrees in a night!

† Whilst the heat kept up within doors varies from 75 to 80 degrees, the temperature outside may be 10, 20, or 30 degrees below zero. What a Turkish bath, indeed!

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

*Jonathan's Eccentricities.—The Arc de Triomphe not being Hirable, an American proposes to Buy it.—The Town Council of Paris do not Close with Him.—Cathedrals on Hire.—Companies Insuring against Matrimonial Infidelity.—Harmony Association.—Burial of a Leg.—Last Will and Testament of an American who Means to be Absent on the Day of Judgment.*

JONATHAN measures everything by his own gigantic ell.

His notions are like the continent he inhabits: vast, almost boundless. He has done such wonders, that he feels equal to doing anything and everything.

The result is that America is the home of all forms of eccentricities, of all forms of daring. To the Americans themselves, this daring, these eccentricities are the most natural things in the world, and that is what makes their charm.

Jonathan considers that everything is to be had, it is but a question of will and of money. How much? So much—Done.

Parisians remember very well the American millionaire who, on the occasion of his daughter's marriage, wrote to the *Conseil Municipal* to ask for the loan of the Arc de Triomphe, which he was

anxious to decorate in honour of the wedding, and have the special use of during the day.

He was politely informed that the Arch was not *to let.*

"Then I will buy it," he replied; "name your price."

The offer was a royal one, and the American, I doubt not, thought the Town Council mad to let slip such a chance of doing business.

Jonathan would ask the Queen to lend him Windsor Castle for the season, if the fancy took him.

A Bostonian once conceived the idea of entertaining his friends with the performance of an oratorio. His drawing-room being much too small to hold the party he wished to invite, he thought of hiring a concert-room or a theatre for the night.

"But, no," he said to himself, "an oratorio would be much more impressive in a sacred edifice."

And he set about hiring the cathedral of the place.

Such things as these make us smile, and we say, "Those Americans are crazy." Certainly they are a little bit *touched.*

In America, the most preposterous ideas find partisans—and subscribers.

Thus, I saw in one of the most widely read American newspapers the announcement of a company recently founded, with a capital of 500,000 dollars, called:

"Matrimonial Infidelity Insurance Company."

The prospectus of this enterprise states its object and advantages with categorical clearness. Each sufferer, upon presenting proof, is to receive from the company a cheque as a sort of court-plaster to patch up his lacerated feelings. I would not advise you to put a penny in the concern. I have no confidence in the dividends of an enterprise which might some day have to pay a fabulous sum to a Mormon, whose twenty or thirty wives had taken it into their heads to desert in a batch.

The "Consoler" would be a good name for this company of insurance against the risks of marriage.

I also note the existence of a *Harmony Association*, the object of which is to examine men and women about to marry, and to give them Mr. Punch's advice, or to stamp the men warranted to wear and the women warranted to wash. No more frauds possible. Perhaps the association may presently undertake to furnish the certificate of the decease of the future mother-in-law.

As a specimen of small and harmless eccentricities, I extract the following from an American paper:

"Mrs. Margaret R., of New York, had her leg amputated the other day, and insisted upon its having Christian burial in her family lot in Calvary Cemetery. A death certificate was made out by the doctor, setting forth that the leg had died of amputation at the Chambers Street Hospital,

November 29th, 1887; that it was fifty years old, married, and part mother of a family. The leg was buried with all due ceremony."

The thing being quite natural, the newspaper makes no comment upon it. It only supplies it with a good heading, something like *A Leg gone to Heaven in advance of its Owner.*

A certain Mr. Ambrose R., of Pittsburg, evidently intending to be a defaulter at the Last Judgment, has drawn up a will giving these directions for the disposal of his remains:

"I direct that my body be taken to St. Michael's Church, and, after the proper religious services are performed, that it be given in charge of my family, who will convey it to Samson's Crematory, and there have it burned to ashes, the ashes to be put in a small bottle and given in charge of the German Consul in Pittsburg. This gentleman will then forward my ashes to the Consul in New York, who will give them in charge of the captain of the German steamer *Elba*, who will place them securely in his ship for the ocean voyage. When at mid-ocean, I direct the captain to request one of the crew to ascend to the top of the topmost mast with my ashes in his hand, and, after pronouncing a last benediction, to extract the cork from the bottle and cast its contents to the four winds of heaven. I direct also, while this ceremony is being performed, that it be witnessed by all the passengers on board. After the *Elba* has completed her trip and returned

again to New York, I want a full statement of my death and the scattering of my ashes in mid-ocean published in the Pittsburg papers, so that my friends in this city shall know my burial-place."

This reminds me of Chateaubriand's ocean burial, but the sprinkling adds a touch of humour of which poor Chateaubriand was wholly destitute.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

*Advertisements.—Marvellous Puffs.—Illustrated Ditto.—A Yankee on the Look-out for a Living.—"Her Heart and a Cottage."—A Circus Proprietor and the President of the United States.—Irresistible Offers of Marriage.—A Journalist of all Work.—Wanted, a Frenchwoman, Young, Pretty, and Cheerful.—Nerve-calming Syrup.—Doctors on the Road.—An Advocate Recommends Himself to Light-fingered Gentlemen.—Mr. Phineas Barnum, the King of Showmen.—Nothing is Sacred in the Eyes of Phineas, the Modern Phœnix.—My Manager regrets not being able to Engage Mr. Gladstone and Lord Randolph Churchill for Platform Work in the United States.*

THE Americans of to-day are so *blasé* on the matter of advertisements, that it is difficult to attract their attention without getting up extravagant baits for their eyes.

To announce your wares as superior to all that have been yet before the public; to publish testimonial letters from all the worthy folk who have been cured by your drug; to merely describe yourself as honest and industrious, when seeking a situation, —the day for all this is past.

After the ordinary, it became necessary to adopt the extraordinary, and, in these times, it is as much as the marvellous can do to produce any effect.

The most effective bait is the illustrated advertise-

ment. Here, for instance, is the "Capilline," which makes the hair and whiskers grow as if by magic. You have to be so careful in handling the stuff, that if a drop were to fall, say, on your nose, a tuft of hair would immediately grow thereon. On the left, you see a poor fellow, bald, whiskerless, and wan. A young lady is turning her back on him with a look of disgust. The illustration is entitled, "Before using Capilline—Refused." On the right, you see a superb male beauty, adorned with a luxuriant growth of hair and beard. The same young lady reposes her head on his shoulder, and raises her rapturous eyes to his. Underneath are the words, "After using Capilline—Accepted." But the most marvellous part of it is, that the "Capilline" has changed the cut of the man's coat. First he was dressed in a lank, threadbare, shapeless sack; after having used the magic elixir, he has bloomed into the pink of tailoring perfection.

I culled the following advertisement from one of the New York papers:

"As Collector or Salesman.—Slim, sleek, slender, sharp, shrewd, sensible, sarcastic Yank, seeks a situation in some store,* hotel or office, as collector or salesman; has highest references, and push and cheek of an army mule: can sell goods or collect bills with any man on the continent of North America (Buck's County, Penn., included)."

The next specimen is an idyll. It is entitled, *Her Heart and a Cottage.* "For hours she was lost in

* Mark the attractive buzzing of all these *s*'s.

ecstasy, gazing into her lover's eyes. 'How beautiful you are,' she said, 'and how happy you look! Darling, say that it is I who am the cause of your happiness.' The handsome young man tenderly kissed the lips of his dear one. 'Yes,' he said, 'it is because you love me that I am so happy, but I owe my look of resplendent health to Dr. Benson's syrup.'"

A Chicago draper thus advertises his annual sale:

"Sell or Perish—Pay or Die—I must get rid of my stock this week."

On a hairdresser's shop, I read:

"Tonsorial Palace—Professor Rogers has your hair cut under his own supervision. How is it cut? —*As You Like It* (Shakespeare)."

President Cleveland, wishing one day to see a certain circus performance, sent to retain a box. The circus proprietor immediately hired, and sent about the streets of the town, a small army of sandwich men, carrying an advertisement worded as follows: "The President of the United States, with his young and beautiful wife, will honour the circus with their presence this evening."

There was such a demand for seats, that numbers of people were refused; but Mr. and Mrs. Cleveland, having heard that their names had served as an advertisement, did not appear.

After the performance, a great part of the audience demanded the return of half their entrance

money, on the ground that the programme had not been carried out in its entirety, since the President and his wife had not made their appearance, as the spectators had been led to expect.

The circus manager was obliged to reimburse, says the paper from which I extract the account.

Never lay aside an American newspaper without reading the advertisements. Ten to one you will be rewarded for your patience.

The following appeared in the *New York Herald* matrimonial column:

"A Christian gentleman, good family, highest character, American, handsome, educated, cultured, will give his youthful manhood and vigour for the love of a maiden lady with an income; marriage; no triflers."

This reads a "trifle" like a hoax of some male trifler.

In another column, an American, desirous of learning French, expresses himself thus:

"An American desires to take French lessons of a French lady, young, well-bred, good-looking, and of a lively disposition."

A tempting offer for my countrywomen.

A journalist in the ranks of the unemployed naively addresses himself to the editors of American papers:

"A journalist without children, and total abstainer, wishes to obtain a situation as reporter. Writes leaders, general gossip, interviews, literary,

musical, and dramatic criticisms, and police-court reports. Fertile imagination: can make one or two interesting columns out of the smallest incident."

Fertile imagination! This is the most important testimonial for an American journalist.

An apothecary may puff a nerve-calming syrup by announcing that, to be happy in his domestic relations, "a husband should administer a table-spoonful of it to his wife every morning," without great loss of dignity: but it is not the shopkeeper alone who has recourse to such means for keeping himself before the public; much the same thing is done by certain doctors and lawyers. Of course these charlatans are not to be confounded with the numerous lawyers and doctors who are an honour to their professions; but, at any rate, they are men who have passed examinations to obtain licence, if not their degree.

There are travelling doctors in America who go from town to town to heal the sick at reduced prices.

Here is the advertisement of one of these gentlemen. It is headed with his portrait, and appears in the papers of the towns he operates upon:

"Dr. R. has already remained in M—— longer than he first intended, but at the request of numerous invalids and friends he will extend his stay one week longer. Patients in other towns have been disappointed by his long stay in M——; but they have his assurance that this visit WILL NOT BE EXTENDED BEYOND THE TIME STATED ABOVE."

This stereotyped advertisement has a flavour of the drum and cymbals of the mountebank. Walk up, ladies and gentlemen, walk up and show your tongues and have your pulses felt.

Further down, this same medical gentleman falls into the style of the chimney-sweep, anxious to enlarge his connection: "He thanks his many friends and patrons for the kindness and patronage bestowed upon him, and trusts, by pursuance of the same honourable business and professional methods and efforts, to fully merit a continuance of same."

Many a briefless man of the law sends his card around to the occupants of the various prisons. As an improvement upon this, I would suggest (and I do not doubt it has been already done) something in the style of Dr. R.'s puff:

"Mr. X., advocate, presents his compliments to the gentlemen of the light finger, and hopes to be honoured with their confidence. No fees unless the case is won. Mr. X. is eloquent, persuasive, tender, pathetic, impulsive, violent, just as the case may demand. He can disconcert witnesses and touch the jury. Many great criminals owe him their liberty and even their lives."

In the smoking-room of the *Germanic* one day, an American, who sat near me, said, addressing me:

"I believe you are going to America to lecture, sir?"

"Yes," I replied, "I am."

"Who is booming your show, may I ask?" he said in the most natural way in the world.

I must have stared at him like a rustic, being utterly at a loss to understand what he meant.

Upon getting this Americanism explained, I had the satisfaction of finding that my interlocutor's question simply meant, in English, "Who is your impresario?"

"Well," thought I, "I am going to have a lively time in the States, that's evident: this is a foretaste that is promising." I went to my cabin thinking about the Yankee who was to "boom my show."

The greatest "boomer" in America is the great, the only, the unique Barnum. The personality of this king of showmen is not particularly interesting, except for being typically American, and one that could not exist in any country but America.

Mr. Barnum (Phineas is his baptismal name), pursued by Fate, is every five years the victim of a conflagration. His fires happen with terrible regularity. Whilst I was in America, his tigers and elephants were burnt out of house and home. Scarcely had the flames been extinguished, when there were paragraphs in the papers to say that Mr. Barnum's agent was buying fresh animals for the "biggest show on earth," and all over the walls of America's cities were to be seen flaring posters, representing Phineas Barnum rising from the flames, like a modern Phœnix. Appended was a long literary essay, which began: "Rising Phœnix-like

from the ashes of my fifth fire," and setting forth the wonderful attractions of the new show which was to be opened.

Mr. Barnum holds in small esteem the man who lets slip a chance of making money. He would think it quite natural to offer 10,000 francs a week to General Boulanger to show himself in his museum, and would think it very unnatural that the General should refuse such a handsome offer. The rumour had it that the enterprising Phineas wrote to M. Pasteur some time since to try and engage him. He guaranteed, it is said, 50,000 dollars to the illustrious savant if he would inoculate before the American public twice a day. It was not much to ask, and the 50,000 dollars would have been easily earned. Barnum, however, had to content himself with engaging a gentleman in spectacles, resembling more or less the famous master of the Rue d'Ulm, and he succeeded in securing four little Americans whom M. Pasteur had just saved from hydrophobia. They were inoculated (with clear water probably) for a month, in all the principal towns of the States. The Society for the Protection of Animals, which does not include man in its circle of operations, made no objection, and the coffers of the enterprising Phineas overflowed with dollars.

Barnum does not understand how a good offer can be refused. He looks upon everything as being to sell or to let, and the almighty dollar as the master of the world. One day, he took it into his head to make an offer for the house in which Shakespeare

was born. The English fired up at the idea, and he had to abandon his project, and be satisfied with "Jumbo."

The Musée Grévin in Paris, and Madame Tussaud's Exhibition in London, are full of celebrities in wax. The dream of Barnum is to exhibit them in the flesh.

If every European nation were to become a republic, the dethroned monarchs could go and make their fortunes in America, and the greatest ambition of Barnum would be realised.

Nothing astonishes an American. That which makes his conversation immensely piquant is the calm, natural tone in which he comes out with statements that fairly take your breath away.

My impresario had just engaged me for a lecture season in the States and Canada.

"I shall have two Europeans on my list for next year," he said, "Mr Charles Dickens and yourself. I wanted two others, but they were not to be had."

"That is not very flattering," said I; "but who are the two Europeans you cannot get?"

"Mr. Gladstone and Lord Randolph Churchill," replied he quite calmly.

Then, suppressing the words "Mr." and "Lord," according to the habit of his countrymen, he added with a sigh:

"Yes, Gladstone would have made a lump, and Churchill would have been an elegant success."

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

*Railways.—Vestibule Trains.—Hotels on Wheels.—Windows and Ventilators, and their Uses.—Pitiless Firemen.—Conductors and their Functions.—A Traveller's Perplexity.—Rudeness of Railway Servants.—The Actress and the Conductor.—An Inquisitive Traveller.—A Negro in a Flourishing Way.—Commerce on board the Cars.—"Apples, Oranges, Bananas!"—The Negro Compartment.—Change of Toilette.—"Mind your own business."*

THE Americans have suppressed distances by bringing railway trains to perfection. You take the cars after dinner to go a two or three hundred mile journey. You pass an hour or two in the smoking-room; you go to your berth, sleep the night through, and by the time you awake you are at your journey's end.

In point of comfort, the American trains are to the French and English trains what these latter are to the stage-coach of bygone days.

Nothing can surpass the comfort and luxury of the Pullman cars, unless it be the perfected Pullman that is called the Vestibule Train. Six or seven carriages, connecting one with another, allow of your moving about freely over a length of some hundred yards. Dining-room, sleeping car, drawing-room car, smoking-room, library, bath-room, lavatory, the whole fitted up in the most luxurious style.

What can one desire more? It is a hotel on wheels. It is your *appartement*, in which you whirl from New York to Chicago in twenty-four hours. Cook, barber, valets de chambre—you have all at hand. Yes, a barber! There is a barber's shop at the end of the train. Perhaps, by-and-by, they will introduce a billiard-room. The platforms at the ends of the carriages are closed in by a concertina-pleated arrangement having doors opening outwards. You pass from one carriage to the other without having to expose yourself to cold or rain; children may play about and run from carriage to carriage with perfect safety. Everything has been thought out, everything has been carried out that could conduce to the comfort of travellers; and unless the Americans invent a style of dwelling that can be moved about from one place to another (and they will come to this, no doubt, in time), I do not see that one could desire, or even imagine, more agreeable, more elegant, or safer railway carriages.

Let anything unforeseen occur—a snowstorm, for instance,—delaying the train for hours, and you at once recognise the superiority of American trains over European ones. Instead of being cooped up in a narrow box-like compartment, shivering with cold and hunger until the rails have been cleared, you can move about from one end of the thoroughly warmed train to the other, and obtain food and drink when you require it. Under such circumstances it is not difficult to resign yourself to the delay.

Rugs are a useless encumbrance. The trains are warmed from October to April. As soon as you enter the carriages, you feel the need of taking off your wraps, for the temperature is generally hovering about the eighties.

The fireman is a pitiless ebon tyrant, who will take no heed to your appeals for mercy: let the temperature be high or low, he evidently considers his whole duty to be the piling on of as much coal as the stove will burn.

There are windows and ventilators: but if you open your window, you will see your fellow-travellers turn up their coat-collars and get down their shawls and furs; and you will hear energetic grumblings, which will give you to understand that you are turning yourself into a public calamity. The Americans are shivery people, stewing themselves in a *bain-marie*.

As to the ventilators, they are under the management of the car conductor; and if that gentleman is not too warm, you may gasp and faint before getting any relief from him. The comfort of the travellers is not his affair; and if you succeed in coaxing him to open one or two ventilators, he soon comes along again to close them.*

Here, as well as in the hotels, and in all conditions of American life, you are at the mercy of servants. There is no remedy at hand, no appeal against it.

* Even in the morning, after twenty or thirty people have passed the night in the car, it is quite difficult to get the ventilators opened to change the air.

The car conductors are generally impolite, even rude. Do not ask them questions—above all, those questions which travellers are wont to ask: "Shall we soon be at ——?" "Is the train late?" "What is the next station?" etc. In America you are supposed to know everything, and no one will help you unless you should happen to address yourself to well-bred people.

If you ask a passer-by in the street the nearest way to the station, he makes as though he understood you not. The word *station* is English; but you must talk American here, and say *depôt*, pronounced *deepo*.

When a railway servant has succeeded in insulting you, he is quite proud, and plumes himself on his smartness; he looks at his mates and seems to say, "Did you hear how I spoke up to him?" He would be afraid of lowering himself by being polite. In his eyes, politeness is a form of servility; and he imagines that, by being rude to well-bred people, he puts himself on a footing with them, and carries out the greatest principle of democracy—equality. Just so agreeable, obliging, and considerate as is the cultivated American; just so rude, rough, and inconsiderate is the lower-class one.

You go to a railway ticket-office to book for a certain place. Perhaps there are several lines of railway running to your destination. The clerk says, without looking at you, and at the rate of a thousand words a minutes:

"What line? B. and O., or S.F. and W.R.R., or C.I.L. and C.?"

"I want a ticket for Chicago."

"I ask you whether you wish to go by the——"

Here he once more repeats various parts of the alphabet, casting a look of pity at you the while. Do not believe he will translate his A B C D's into English—it is your place to understand them.

Do not lose your temper, however; that never pays in America. The natives would only enjoy it. Take the matter laughingly. This is the advice the Americans gave me; and I recommend it to you, if ever you are similarly placed.

I was having a siesta one day in one of the comfortable arm-chairs of a drawing-room car, when the conductor came along and, giving me a formidable thump, cried out in the most savage tone:

"Your ticket!"

I made haste to oblige him, and to offer apologies.

"I trust I have not kept you waiting," said I.

He went away quite crestfallen.

You see, in America, you must be polite to everyone, or you would constantly be running the risk of treating with disrespect a future President.

Another day I was in a New York local train. These trains have not drawing-room cars with smoking-rooms attached. Neither first, second, nor third class: all the carriages are alike. I addressed the conductor, asking him where I should find the smoking-compartment. In reply, he murmured a few unintelligible words between his teeth. In my humblest, sweetest accents, I said:

"Excuse me, I did not hear."

He shouted at me at the top of his voice:

"Be—hind—the—lo—co—mo—tive; do you hear this time?"

My first impulse was to knock him down. But I bethought myself of the advice that had been given me, and answered, with a smile:

"Yes, I heard. I beg a thousand pardons. You are really too polite."

A popular American actress was dining one evening in the dining-room car of a New York train. Being alone, she ate slowly, and deliberately dawdled over the meal, to kill time. The waiter, displeased at the audacity of such conduct, stood about within hearing, and began making the rudest remarks on her proceedings.

When she had quite finished her dinner, and he came to remove the dishes, the actress wrote a few words upon one of her cards and, handing it to him with a sweet smile, she said:

"Here is my card; if you hand it in at the Opera House to-morrow evening, you will be provided with a stall. I regret exceedingly that it is not in my power to offer you a box—it is such a treat to meet with a polite railway servant!"

I have met, occasionally, with a polite conductor, but they are in the proportion of one to ten.

The names of the stations are hidden. Do not hope that the conductor will clear up the mystery.

The train had just stopped a few leagues from Richmond.

"What station is this?" asked a traveller, addressing the conductor.

This individual simply shrugged his shoulders and turned his back.

I happened to be close to him.

"What inquisitive people there are, to be sure!" I said to him.

To an irritable person, the rudeness of the railway and hotel servants would be enough to spoil all the pleasure of a visit to America. But the Americans themselves are good-tempered, and pay no attention to these things. I know some who even get a certain amount of amusement therefrom.

The negro who makes your bed is more polite; but his politeness is not disinterested. A few moments before the arrival of the train at your destination, he brushes you down, and receives the invariable quarter (25 cents) for his trouble. These negroes, independently of the salary paid them by the company they work for, make from forty to fifty shillings a day in this way: say, from five to six hundred pounds a year.

How many a white would turn black for less!

There is another annoyance on the railway, a veritable bugbear that it is hard to bear philosophically.

On board the train is an indefatigable general dealer, whose store is in the last car.

Scarcely is the train in motion when he commences

operations. He begins by taking a bundle of newspapers, with which he goes his first round, banging the doors after him. This done, he returns to his store, puts by the papers he has not sold, takes a basket, fills it with apples, oranges, and bananas, and starts again. Second banging of the doors at either end of your car. He shouts "Apples, oranges, bananas!" as he goes. You shake your head to let him know that you do not wish any of his fruit, and he passes. Then he returns to his shop. You think you would like a nap, and will proceed to have one. You are reckoning without your host. He presently reappears with jujubes and cough lozenges; then with travelling-caps; then with cigars and cigarettes. After that, it is photographs. He plagues you to examine his albums, the quality of which he vaunts with a zeal worthy of a better cause. You send him about his business, but not for long. He soon comes round again, bearing an armful of monthly magazines; and after that, with a pile of novels. Whether you have your eyes closed or not, he lays one or two on your lap, and rouses you to know if really you are not going to buy anything of him. Your blood rises, you feel at last as if it would be a relief to fling his merchandise at his head, or rather out of the window, with him after it. But, "patience!" you say to yourself. "After all, he must soon exhaust his stock-in-trade, and then I shall have peace." Vain illusion! Five minutes later he begins his rounds again with the apple and banana basket. This is too much, and you inwardly send him to

destruction, with his apples, jujubes, travelling-caps, newspapers, books, and all his—stock-in-trade.

The Americans have the patience of angels. I have seen them, for five or six hours, refuse with the politest sign of the head the different articles of these ambulant bazaars. They seem to say: "That creature is very annoying, a terrible nuisance; but I suppose we must all get a living somehow."

Returning to Jacksonville from St. Augustine, I omitted to engage my place in the parlour-car, and was obliged to find a seat in the ordinary cars. The evil was not great, seeing that the journey takes but fifty minutes.

Besides the parlour-car, the train comprised three cars, two of which were already almost full. I installed myself in the third, which was empty.

Up comes the conductor.

"Come out; you can't travel in that car," he said.

"Why, pray?" I asked.

"Because it is the coloured people's car."

"And am I not as good as they?"

"I tell you you can't travel in this car."

"I am sorry, for once, that I am not coloured," I said to him; "it is much the cleanest of your carriages."

Going to the end of the last carriage, I found myself just in front of the apple, banana, jujubes, book, and cap store.

From my seat I was able to contemplate the

activity of the commercial gentleman at the head of this department.

During the fifty minutes' ride, he was going and coming continually.

When his last tour of the train had been made, he put all the merchandise which he had not sold in place, took off his uniform, put on a black coat and hat, and fastened into his cravat a huge *diamond* pin. I looked on at the rapid metamorphosis with great interest. When his toilet was completed, he turned round and, seeing that I was looking at him, he threw me a patronising glance, eyeing me from head to foot. I thought he was about to say:

"What is it you want?"

"Well, business is looking up, eh?" I hazarded.

"Mind your own d—— business," he replied; and, turning on his heels, he departed.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

*Jonathan's Domestics.—Reduced Duchesses.—Queer Ideas of Equality.—Unchivalrous Man.—The Ladies of the Feather-broom.—Mr. Vanderbilt's Cook.—Negroes.—Pompey's Wedding.—Where is my coat?—Kitchen Pianists.—"Punch's" Caricatures Outdone by Reality.—A Lady seeks a Situation as Dishwasher.—Why it is Desirable not to Part with your Servants on Bad Terms.*

JONATHAN'S domestics all appear to me to be reduced duchesses and noblemen in livery.

When you speak to a man-servant, before replying he scans you from head to foot, and seems to say:

"Who may you be? Be careful how you talk to me! We are a free nation: all equals here, and I am as good as you, sir!"

And you feel inclined to say to him:

"I congratulate you, young man, upon living in a free country; but since we are all equals here, and I am civil to you, why on earth cannot you be civil to me?"

The fellow is lacking in logic.

The manner of the maid-servant is different; she wears a look of contempt and profound disgust: she seems to say with a sigh:

"How can men be such brutes as to allow women

to work! What despicable creatures they are, to be sure!"

She moves about the room frowning, and as she goes out, darts at you a look full of vengeance. It is especially in the hotels of country towns that you observe the traits above mentioned.

To get an idea of the prodigious labour undertaken by an American servant-girl, one has but to see her at work *doing* a room, feather-broom in hand.

The coal most used in America is the anthracite kind; it has its good qualities: it throws out great heat and burns for many hours; but it makes a quantity of light ashes, which cover the furniture of a room with a thick coating of dust every day.

Whenever I chanced to see the chambermaid in the morning shaking my curtains, and making a cloud of dust, enough to prevent one from seeing across the room, it was all I could do to refrain from calling out to her, "My good girl, you are giving yourself a great deal of trouble for nothing; don't meddle with the dust, it is better where it is." Thanks to the feather-broom, my parlour was always done in a twinkling; but before I dared go into it, I was obliged to wait until the dust had returned to its place again.

A day or two after this remarkable manner of dusting had attracted my attention, I came across the following in *Puck:*

Sarah is doing the drawing-room. Enters the mistress of the house, evidently fearing to be choked by the cloud of dust that fills the room.

"Sarah, what are you doing?"

"I 'm dusting the room."

"I see. When you've finished, please to undust it."

Servants' wages range from £40 to £60 a year—I mean, of course, in good ordinary houses, and not in millionaire's mansions. Mr. C. Vanderbilt pays his chief cook two thousand pounds a year. I write the sum in letters that the reader may not exclaim, "Surely there is an error here; the printer has put one nought too many."

In spite of the enormously high wages they pay, the Americans have so much trouble in getting good servants that numbers of them are, so to speak, driven from their homes, and obliged to take refuge in hotels and apartment-houses.

Negro servants are the only ones at all deferential in manner, or who have a smile on their faces from time to time; but many people have an objection to them, and charge them with serious faults, such as finding things which are not lost, and breaking the monotony of life by dressing up in their employers' raiment when occasion offers.

An American of my acquaintance, upon going to his room one evening to dress for a dinner-party, found his dress-coat and waistcoat missing from the wardrobe. Guessing their whereabouts, he went upstairs, and there, in his negro-butler's room, were the missing garments. He rang for the culprit.

"Pompey, I have found my dress-clothes in your room. What is the meaning of it?"

"I forgot to put dem back, sah."

"You have had them on, you rascal?"

"Yes, sah."

"How dare you wear my clothes?"

"Please, massa, I got married yesterday," and the broad black face of Pompey was lit up with a rather sheepish-looking grin.

All the caricatures of the comic papers are outdone by realities in America.

These, for instance, are not caricatures, but facts:

Servant-maids will often refuse to enter your service if there is not a piano in the basement.

Others will demand folding-beds. They will give you to understand that, when they receive their "gentlemen" friends, it is not proper and becoming to entertain them in a room where the bed on which they repose their charms at night is spread out.

I know a lady who, losing her patience with her housemaid one day, said to her:

"I expect my servants to do so and so."

"Your what?" cried the indignant damsel. "I 'll just tell you what I think of you. You ain't no lady, that 's certain."

Needless to say that American "helps" vie with their mistresses in display of toilette. Everyone knows that. Their diamonds are false, of course; but there are so many rhinestones worn by ladies who are not "helps" (even to their husbands), that

it is difficult to distinguish the wife of a millionaire from her kitchenmaid by their diamonds.

Here are two advertisements which I extract from an Indianapolis newspaper:

"Situation as dishwasher required by a lady.—Apply *Sentinel* Office."

"A lady (white) undertakes washing at home."—(Address follows.)

Democracy can no further go.

"I take care never to part on bad terms with my servants when they leave me." This was said to me one day by a clever Boston lady, who, to my thinking, lacks sufficient admiration for the democratic institutions of America.

I guessed that she intended a covert satire on the greatest Republic in the world.

"Why?" I demanded.

"Because, when one of those girls leaves me, it is quite within the range of possibility that she will marry some Western ranchman; and one day, when her husband becomes a Senator, she may be useful to me at Washington."

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

*Jonathan's Table.—Danger of Steel Knives.—The Americans are Water-drinkers.—I discover a Snake in my Tumbler.—The Negro Waiter Comforts Me.—Accommodation for Travellers.—The Menu.—Abbreviated Dinner.—The Little Oval Dishes.—Turkey and Cranberry Sauce.—A not very Tempting Dish.—Consolation of Knowing that the Waitresses are well cared for.—Something to Eat, for Heaven's Sake!—Humble Apologies to Mine Host.*

THE great mass of the American people live on tough meat uncooked, and iced water unfiltered.

I take it for granted that sheep and cattle are born at as tender an age in America as elsewhere; but the Society for the Protection of Animals probably prevents their being killed for food while they are young enough to enjoy life, and so the patriarchs alone are reserved for the table.

That which renders the problem of dining almost past solving is, that the meat has to be attacked with plated knives, which tear but do not cut it. I suppose that, as half the lower-class Americans still eat with their knives, it was necessary to abandon the idea of having steel knives, for fear of their accidentally gashing their faces. If sharp steel knives were in general use in America, the streets would be

full of people with faces scarred and seamed like those of the Heidelberg students.

The Americans drink little else but water at table, and one cannot help wondering how it is that the filter seems to be an almost unknown institution in the land. Leave your glass of water untouched on the table, and, in a few moments, a thick sediment of mud or sand will be visible at the bottom of it.

Down south it is worse still.

At Jacksonville, I was waited upon at table by an extremely obliging negro.

One day he brought me some water, put ice in it, and discreetly withdrew behind my chair.

I took up the glass, and minutely inspected its contents.

"Epaminondas!" said I.

"Dat's not my name, sah; I'm called Charles."

"Charles, look at this water; there is a snake in it."

Charles took the glass, looked at it, and then, with a reasurring grin, announced:

"It's dead, sah."

"That is comforting," said I; "but it may have left eggs, which will come to life by thousands inside me."

Charles was facetious, and was not to be put out of countenance for such a trifle. He took up the glass again, re-examined it, and replaced it on the table.

"Dere's no danger, sah; it's a male," he said.

In almost all hotels throughout the south, the waiters are coloured men. The service is but poor. The negroes are slow: it is the guests who do the "waiting."

At Delmonico's especially, and in the principal hotels of New York, Boston, Washington, Philadelphia, and Chicago, you can dine admirably. In the smaller towns you feed.

But let us take our seats at the *table d'hôte* of the best hotel in any second-rate town that you please in Ohio, Pennsylvania, or some other State of the Union.

No printed *menu*. A young woman, with an elaborate coiffure of curls, rolls, and bangs, but no cap, approaches, darts a look of contempt at you, and, turning her back upon you, gabbles off in one breath:

"Croutaupoturbotshrimpsauceroastbeefturkeycranberrysaucepotatoestomatoesspinachappletartmincepiecheesevanillacream."

Do not attempt to stop her; she is wound up, and when she is started is bound to go to the end. You must not hope that she will repeat the *menu* a second time, either. If you did not hear, so much the worse for you. Unfortunately, the consequences are grave: it is not one dish that you miss, it is the whole dinner. You are obliged to order all your repast at once; and the whole is brought you, from soup to cheese, at one time.

I was so ill-inspired one day as to order some

soup to begin with. The waitress refused downright to bring me anything more.

"That is all you ordered," she said to me; "you do not suppose I can make twenty journeys to the kitchen for you."

I rose and sought the hotel-keeper. I made the humblest apologies; pleaded that I was a foreigner who had only been in America a fortnight, and was not yet accustomed to the habits of the Americans. I promised solemnly never to transgress again in this way. Mine host went to the young person who was at the head of the battalion of harpies in the dining-room, and interceded for me with her. I had the happiness of being forgiven, and was allowed to appease my hunger.

From that day forward, as soon as one of these witching damsels began her incantation, I cried out:

"Hold! Enough! Bring it all in."

Then I would eat the least distasteful of the messes, and leave the rest. I can assure you the hotel did not make much profit out of me.

This is how the dinner is served:

The "duchess" begins by flinging a spoon and knife and fork down on the table in front of you. It is for you to set them straight, and I would advise you to do so without any murmuring. When you have taken your soup, the said "duchess" brings you a plate, around which she places a dozen little oval dishes in a symmetrical fashion that one can but admire.

The first little dish contains fish, and a teaspoonful of sauce of some kind. It is needless to inquire the name of this sauce. All the fish sauces are the same; only the name varies. The second apparently contains a little lump of raw beef; the third, a slice of roast turkey; the fourth, mashed potatoes; the fifth, a stewed tomato; the sixth, cranberry sauce; the seventh, chicken salad; the eighth, some rice-pudding; and the last contains *(horrible dictu!)* a slice of apple-tart, with a large helping of cheese in the middle of it. These two things are eaten together, and are consequently served on the same dish.

You begin at the left. The fish presents no obstacle but its bones, and is soon disposed of. You turn your attention to the next dish on the right, and attack the beef. It is impregnable; you can make no impression upon it. You pass. The turkey is not obdurate, and you fall to on that, making little raids on the potatoes, tomatoes, and cranberry sauce between each mouthful. Thanks to the many climates of America (the thermometer varies in winter from 75 above zero in the south to 45 below in the north), you have turkey and cranberry sauce all the winter, strawberries six months of the year, and tomatoes almost all the year round.

Oh, the turkey and cranberry sauce! I ate enough of that dish to satisfy me for the rest of my days. No more turkey with cranberry sauce for me, though I should live to be a hundred!

Of course, all the meats placed around your

plate soon begin to cool, and you have no choice but to bolt your food, diving with knife and fork into the little dishes right and left as dexterously as you can.

Finally you come to the apple-tart, on the extreme right. You carefully lift the cheese, and, placing it aside, prepare to eat your sweets without the strange seasoning. Unhappily, the pastry has become impregnated with an odour of roquefort, and again you pass. A vanilla ice terminates your repast.

Having disposed of this, you ask yourself why, in a free country, you may not have your various courses served one after the other; why you must bolt your food, and bring on indigestion; and, above all, why the manager of the hotel, in his own interest as a man of business, does not, before all else, study the comfort of his customers. The answer is not difficult to find. It is the well-being of the "duchesses," and not that of the traveller, that he devotes his attention to studying. The traveller is obliged to come to his house, and he can treat him anyhow. His "helps" will only consent to stay with him on condition he gives them heavy wages and light duties. He has no choice but to submit to his servants, or to close his hotel. The Americans, free though they may be politically, are at the mercy of their servants, whether in public or private life. This kind of tyranny is hateful. To throw off the yoke of the superior classes is very well; but I am not aware that the yoke of the common people is at all prefer-

able. John Bull commands all his paid servants; Jonathan obeys his.

Thus in the hotels of America, outside of the large towns, with the rarest exceptions, the dinner is served from one o'clock to three, the tea-supper from six to eight. You happen to arrive at half-past three, tired out and famishing. You hope to be able to have a good meal without delay. Illusion! You must wait until the dining-room door is opened, and pass two hours and a half in wretchedness. How often have I entreated, implored, "Could you not get a chop cooked for me, or an omelette, or something? If that is impossible, for mercy's sake give me a slice of cold meat." Prayers and supplications were unavailing. Occasionally a landlord would express his regrets, and make excuses for his inability to oblige me; but far oftener, I got no kind of response at all. Once or twice I tried making a tempest, without any more success. Another time I tried politeness. "Excuse me," I said, "if I am intruding. I hope that by putting up at your house I shall not be too much in your way. I have not the honour to be a citizen of the greatest Republic in the world, but am only a poor European who does not know your ways. In future I will take careful precautions. But this time, and just for once, I would be so much obliged for something to eat. I should be distressed to occasion any derangement in your household; but just for once—only once." Sheer waste of breath. The hotel is as it is; you may use it or stay away.

The Americans are quite right to study the comfort of their servants; but the well-being of one class should not exist at the cost of the well-being of another, and the people who travel are as interesting as those who serve at table.

Tyranny from above is a sore; tyranny from below is a pestilence.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

*How the Americans take their Holidays.—The Hotel is their Mecca. — Mammoth Hotels. — Jacksonville and St. Augustine.—The Ponce de Leon Hotel.—Rocking-chairs. —Having a "Good Time!"—The American is never Bored.—The Food is not very Salt, but the Bill is very Stiff.—The Negroes of the South.—Prodigious Memories. —More "Duchesses." — The Negresses. — I Insult a Woman.*

HOTELS are one of the strongest attractions in America to the Americans, especially the ladies.

When we Europeans travel, we alight at a hotel because it is impossible that we should have a pitching place of our own in each town we visit, or friends able to receive us; in other words, we go to the hotel because we cannot help it. When we leave our good bed and table, and set out to see the world a little, we say to ourselves: "The worst part of it is, that we shall have to live in hotels perhaps for a month or two: but, after all, it cannot be helped; we must put up with hotels, since we have made up our minds to see Switzerland, or Scotland, or Italy."

Our object in travelling is to see new countries, make pleasant excursions, climb mountains, &c.; and to attain that object, we must use the hotels as a convenience, as a sad necessity.

In Europe, the hotel is a means to an end.

In America, it is the end.

People travel hundreds, nay, thousands of miles for the pleasure of putting up at certain hotels. Listen to their conversation, and you will find it mainly turns, not upon the fine views they have discovered, or the excursions and walks they have enjoyed, but upon the respective merits of the various hotels they have put up at. Hotels are for them what cathedrals, monuments, ruins, and the beauties of Nature are for us.

In February, 1888, I went to see the Americans taking their pleasure in Florida. During the months of January, February, and March, flocks of society people from the great towns in the north go to Florida, where the sun is warm, and the orange trees are in full beauty of fruit and flower. Jacksonville and St. Augustine are in winter what Saratoga, Newport, and Long Branch are in summer: the rendezvous of all who have any pretension to a place in the fashionable world.

But what do they do at Jacksonville and St. Augustine, all these Americans in search of a "good time"? You think perhaps that in the morning they set out in great numbers to make long excursions into the country or on the water; that picnics, riding parties, and such out-of-door pastimes are organised.

Not so. They get up, breakfast, and make for the balconies or terraces of the hotels, there to rock themselves two or three hours in rocking-chairs until

lunch time; after this they return to their rocking-chairs again and wait for dinner. Dinner over, they go to the drawing-rooms, where there are more rocking-chairs, and listen to an orchestra until bed-time. And yet, what pretty environs the little town of Jacksonville has, for instance! For miles around stretches a villa-dotted orange grove!

And the *table d'hôte!*

Oh! that *table d'hôte!*

In France, we look well at the bill of fare and study it; we discuss the dishes, arranging them discreetly and artistically in the mind before making their acquaintance more fully on the palate. We are *gourmets*. In America, the question seems to be not, "Which of these dishes will go well together?" but, "How many of them can I manage?" It is so much a day; the moderate eaters pay for the gluttons.

You see women come down at eight to breakfast in silk attire, and decked with diamonds. And what a breakfast! First an orange and a banana to freshen the mouth and whet the appetite; then fish, bacon and eggs, or omelette, beefsteak and fried potatoes, hominy cakes, and preserves.

"How little you eat, you Frenchpeople!" said an American to me one day, as I was ordering my breakfast of *café au lait* and bread and butter.

"You are mistaken," said I; "only we do not care for our dinner at eight o'clock in the morning."

The larger the hotel is, the better the Americans like it. A little, quiet, well-kept hotel where, the cookery being done for twenty or thirty persons instead of a thousand, the beef has not the same taste as mutton; a hotel where you are known and called by your name, where you are not simply No. 578, like a convict;—this kind of pitching place does not attract the American. He must have something large, enormous, immense. He is inclined to judge everything by its size.

Jacksonville and St. Augustine boast a score of hotels, each capable of accommodating from six hundred to a thousand guests. These hotels are all full from the beginning of January to the end of March.

I have almost always accepted with reserve the American superlatives followed by the traditional *in the world;* but it may safely be said that the Ponce de Leon Hotel, at St. Augustine, is not only the largest and handsomest hotel in America, but in the whole world. Standing in the prettiest part of the picturesque little town, this Moorish palace, with its walls of onyx, its vast, artistically-furnished saloons, its orange-walks, fountains, cloisters, and towers, is a revelation, a scene from the *Arabian Nights.*

Here the Americans congregate in search of a "good time," as they call it. The charges range from ten to twenty-five dollars a day for each person, exclusive of wines and extras. The American who goes to the Ponce de Leon with his wife and daughters,

therefore spends twelve, fifteen, or twenty pounds a day. For this sum, he and his family are fed, played to by a very ordinary band, and supplied with an immense choice of rocking-chairs. On his return to New York, he declares to his friends that he has had a "lovely time." The American never admits that he has been bored, in America especially. The smallest incidents of the trip are events and adventures, and he never fails to have his "good time." He is as easily pleased as a child, and everything American calls out his admiration, or at least his interest. Remark to him, for instance, that to go by train to Florida from the north, one has to travel through more than six hundred miles of pine-forest —which makes the journey very uninteresting—and he will throw you a pitying glance which seems to say "Immense, sir, immense, like everything that is American."

The temperature of Florida in winter is rarely lower than 64 degrees, and ranges from that to 75; but the climate is moist and enervating, the country a vast marsh, and so flat that, by standing on a chair, one could see to the extremities of it with the aid of a good field glass. Some enterprising American should throw up a hill down there: he would make his fortune. Everyone would go to see it.

It is not everybody who can afford the luxury of the Ponce de Leon Hotel, but it is everybody who likes to be seen there in the season.

You must be able to say, when you return to the

north, that you have been at the Ponce de Leon. This is how it can be managed. You go to some other hotel near the Ponce. In the evening, dressed in all your diamonds, you glide into the courtyard of the great caravansery. Another step takes you to the immense rotunda where the concert is going on. You stroll through the saloons and corridors, and, taking a seat where you can be seen of the multitude, you listen to the music. About ten or eleven o'clock, you beat a retreat and return to your own hotel.

Wishing to set my mind at rest on this matter, I went one evening about half-past nine to the Casa Monica and Florida House. There, in the rooms where the musicians engaged by the proprietors play every evening, were, at the most, a score of people.

Heard at the St. Augustine station as I was leaving:

"Hello! you are off too?" said a young man to a friend who had just installed his wife in the train for Jacksonville.

"My dear fellow, I have been here a fortnight; the Ponce de Leon is magnificent, but the bill is ruinous."

"Never mind, old man; take it off your wife's next dress-money."

Everything is on a grand scale in American hotels, especially the bills.

With few exceptions, the waiters in all the great hotels are negroes. You are served with intelligence and politeness. No "duchesses" in the great cities of the north, or the fashionable resorts of the south.

Those good negroes have such cheerful, open faces! They seem so glad to be alive, and they look so good-natured, that it does one good to see them. When they look at one another, they laugh. When you look at them, they laugh. If a negro sees another negro blacker than himself, he is delighted; he calls him "darky," and looks on him in a patronising way. Their great dark eyes that show the whites so, when they roll them in their own droll fashion; the two rows of white teeth, constantly on view, framed in thick *retroussé* lips; the swaying manner of walking, with turned-out toes and head thrown back; the musical voice, sweet but sonorous, and so pleasing compared to the horrible twang of the lower-class people of the north,—all make up a picturesque whole: you forget the colour, and fall to admiring them.

And how amusing they are!

At the Everett Hotel, Jacksonville, I one day went to the wrong table.

"You 've come to de wrong table, sah," said the attendant darky. Then, indicating the negro who served at the next table, he added, "Dat's de gentleman dat waits on you, sah."

I immediately recognised my "gentleman," and changed my seat. The fact is that all the negroes are alike at a glance. It requires as much per-

spicacity to tell one from another, as it does to distinguish one French gendarme from another French gendarme.

I never met with such memories as some of those darkies have.

As I have said, the hotels of Florida are besieged during the winter months. At dinner time, you may see from six hundred to a thousand people at table. The black head-waiter knows each of the guests. The second time they enter the dining-room, he conducts them to their places without making a mistake in one instance. If you stop but a day, you may return a month after, and not only will he recollect your face, but he will be able to tell you which little table you sat at, and which place at that table was yours.

At the door of the dining-room, a young negro of sixteen or eighteen takes your hat and puts it on a hat-rack. I have seen hundreds thus in his care at a time. You leave the dining-room, and, without a moment's hesitation, he singles out your hat and hands it to you. It is wonderful when one thinks of it. I give you the problem to solve. Several hundred men, most of whom you have not seen more than once or twice before, pass into a room, handing you their chimney-pots or wide-awakes to take care of. They come out of the room in no sort of order, and you have to give each the hat that belongs to him. I have tried hard and often, but never succeeded in finding out how it is done.

Another negro in the hall goes and gets your

key when he sees you return from a walk. No need to tell him the number of your room—he knows it. He may have seen you but once before, but that is all-sufficient—he never errs.

And the negresses! good, merry-looking creatures, with buxom faces and forms, supple, light, graceful gait, and slender waists, aping the fashion, and having very pretty fashions of their own, coquetting and mincing as they walk out with their "tic'lars" (particulars). The enjoyment of life is written on their faces, and one ends by thinking some of them quite pretty. I have seen some splendid figures amongst them. You should see them on Sundays, dressed in scarlet or some other bright colour, with great hats jauntily turned up on one side, and fanning themselves with the ease and grace of Belgravian ladies.

Negresses are not employed as chambermaids in hotels. They go into service only as nurses, and of course children love them. Unhappily for you, it is the objectionable "duchesses" that you find again, upstairs this time. The evil is not so great as it is in the smaller towns, where these young persons wait at table also. In the best hotels, their only duty is to keep the bedrooms tidy. You must not ask any service of them beyond that. If you desire anything brought to your bedroom, you ring, and a negro comes to answer the bell and receive your order.

I remember having one day insulted one of these

women—certainly unintentionally, but the crime was none the less abominable for that.

This was it.

I was dressing to go out to dinner, and wanted some hot water to shave with. Having rung three times and received no answer, I grew impatient and opened the door, in the hope of seeing some servant who would be obliging enough to fetch me the water in question. A chambermaid was passing my door.

"Could you, please, get me some hot water?" I said.

"What do you say?" was the reply, accompanied by a frown of contempt.

"Would you be so good as to get me some hot water?" I timidly repeated.

"Who do you think I am? Haven't you a bell in your room?" replied the harpy.

And she passed along, indignant.

I withdrew into my room in fear and trembling, and for a few minutes was half afraid of receiving a request to quit the hotel immediately.

I shaved with cold water that day.

## CHAPTER XL.

*The Value of the Dollar.—A Dressmaker's Bill.—What American Women must Spend on Dress.—Why so many Americans come to Europe every year.—Current Prices.—The Beggar and the Nickel.—Books and Oysters are Cheap.—Salaries.—"I can afford it."*

IF you go to a changer, he will give you five francs in French money, or four shillings in English, for a dollar. But in America you are not long in discovering that you get for your dollar but the worth of a shilling in English money, or a franc in French.

The flat that lets for 4000 francs in Paris, and the house that is rented at £200 (4000 shillings) in London, would be charged 4000 dollars in New York, Boston, or Chicago.

The simplest kind of dress, one for which a Parisian of modest tastes pays 100 francs, would cost an American lady at least 100 dollars. A visiting dress costing, in Paris, 500 francs, in New York, would be 500 dollars. A hat that would be charged 50 francs is worth 50 dollars. The rest to match.

Here is a dressmaker's bill which fell under my eyes in New York. Divide each amount by five, and you have the sum in pounds sterling.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Robe de chambre ... ... | 200 | dollars |
| Cloth dress ... ... ... | 175 | ,, |
| Opera Cloak ... ... ... | 500 | ,, |
| Riding habit ... ... ... | 180 | ,, |
| Bonnet ... ... ... ... | 30 | ,, |
| Theatre bonnet ... ... | 50 | ,, |
| Black silk dress ... ... | 240 | ,, |
| Ball dress ... ... ... ... | 650 | ,, |

Added up, this makes 2025 dollars, in English money a total of £405. In this bill there is neither mantle, linen, shoes, gloves, lace, nor the thousand little requisites of a woman's toilette, and it is but one out of the three or four bills for the year.

I am convinced that an American woman who pretends to the least elegance must spend, if she be a good manager, from £1000 to £1500 a year. Add to this the fact that she loads herself with diamonds and precious stones. But these, of course, have not to be renewed every three months.

A great number of Americans come to Europe to pass three months of every year. This is not an additional extravagance, it is an economy. They buy their dress for a year, and the money they save by this plan not only pays their travelling expenses, but leaves them a nice little surplus in cash.

A hotel bedroom on the fourth floor, for which you would pay five francs a-day in Paris, in New York is five dollars. A cab which costs you one franc and a half in France, or one shilling and six-

pence in England, costs you a dollar and a half in New York.

The dollar has not more value than this in the lesser towns of the United States. The omnibus, for instance, which takes you to the station from your hotel for sixpence in England, or half a franc in France, costs you half a dollar in America.

Copper money exists in America; but if you were to offer a cent to a beggar, he would fling it at you—fortunately there are very few. When the barefooted urchins in the South beg, their formula is: "Spare us a nickel," or "Chuck us a nickel, guv'nor." The nickel is worth five cents, or twopence-halfpenny English money. The only use of the cent that I could discover was to buy the evening paper.

The only things cheap in the States are native oysters, and English or French books that have been translated (?) into American.

If expenses are enormous in the United States, I must hasten to add that it is chiefly the foreign visitor who suffers in purse. The American can afford to pay high prices, because his receipts are far larger than they would be in Europe. Situations bringing in forty or fifty pounds are unknown in America. Bank clerks and shopmen command salaries of from £200 to £400 a year. A railway-car conductor gets £160 as wages.

In the grades above, in the professions, the fees, compared with those earned in Europe, are also in the proportion of the dollar to the shilling or franc.

A newspaper article, which would be paid in France 250 francs (and no French paper, except the *Figaro*, pays so much for an article) is often paid 250 dollars in America. A doctor is paid from five to ten dollars a visit. I am, of course, not speaking of specialists and fashionable doctors; their charges are fabulous. I know barristers who make from twenty to thirty and forty thousand pounds.

Everyone is well paid in the United States, except the Vice-President.

If I have spoken of the high cost of living, it is to state a fact, and not to make a complaint. I went to America as a lecturer, not as a tourist. Jonathan paid me well; and when Cabby asked me for a dollar and a half to take me to a lecture-hall, I said, like M. Joseph Prudhomme, "It is expensive, but I can afford it," and I paid without grumbling.

## CHAPTER XLI.

*Conclusion.—Reply to the American Question.—Social Condition of Europe and America.—European Debt and American Surplus.—The Americans are not so Happy as the French.—What Jonathan has Accomplished.—A Wish.*

"WELL, sir, and what do you think of America?"

Without pretending to judge America *ex cathedra*, I will sum up the impressions jotted down in this little volume, and reply to the traditional question of the Americans.

When one thinks of what the Americans have done in a hundred years of independent life, it looks as if nothing should be impossible to them in the future, considering the inexhaustible resources at their disposition.

America has been doubling its population every twenty-five years. If emigration continues at the same rate as it has hitherto, in fifty years she will have more than two hundred millions of inhabitants. If, during that time, continental Europe makes progress only in arts and sciences, while the social condition of its nations does not improve, she will be to America what barbarism is to civilisation.

While the Hohenzollerns, the Hapsburgs, and the *Firebrandenburgs* review their troops; while her standing armies cost Europe more than £200,000,000 a year in peace time; whilst the European debt is

£5,000,000,000, the American treasury at Washington, in spite of corruption, which it is well known does exist, has a surplus of sixty million dollars. Whilst European Governments cudgel their wits to devise means for meeting the expenses of absolute Monarchies, the Washington Government is at a loss to know what to do with the money it has in hand. Whilst the European telegrams in the daily papers give accounts of reviews, mobilisations, and military manœuvres; of speeches in which the people are reminded that their duty is to serve their Emperor first, and their country afterwards; of blasphemous prayers in which God is asked to bless soldiers, swords, and gunpowder; the American telegrams announce the price of wheat and cattle and the quotations on the American Stock Exchange.

Happy country that can get into a state of ebullition over a Presidential Election, or the doings of John Sullivan while Europe in trembling asks herself, with the return of each new spring, whether two or three millions of her sons will not be called upon to cut each other's throats, for the great glory of three Emperors in search of a little excitement!

America is not only a great nation, geographically speaking. The Americans are a great people, holding in their hands their own destiny; learning day by day, with the help of their liberty, to govern themselves more and more wisely; and able, thanks to the profound security in which they live, to consecrate all their talents and all their energy to the arts of peace.

The well-read, well-bred American is the most delightful of men; good society in America is the wittiest, most genial, and most hospitable I have met with.

But the more I travel, and the more I look at other nations, the more confirmed am I in my opinion that the French are the happiest people on earth.

The American is certainly on the road to the possession of all that can contribute to the well-being and success of a nation; but he seems to me to have missed the path that leads to real happiness. His domestic joys, I am inclined to think, are more shadowy than real. To live in a whirl is not to live well.

America suffers from a general plethora.

Jonathan himself sometimes has his regrets at finding himself drawn into such a frantic race, but declares that it is out of his power to hang back. If it were given to man to live twice on this planet, I should understand his living his first term *à l'Américaine*, so as to be able to enjoy quietly, in his second existence, the fruits of his toil in the first. Seeing that only one sojourn here is permitted us, I think the French are right in their study to make it a long and happy one.

If the French could arrive at a steady form of government and live in security, they would be the most enviably happy people on earth.

It is often charged against Americans that they are given to bragging. May not men who have done marvels be permitted a certain amount of self-glorification?

It is said, too, that their eccentricity constantly leads them into folly and licence. Is it not better to have the liberty to err than to be obliged to run straight in leash? If they occasionally vote like children, like children they will learn. It is by voting that people learn to vote.

Is there any country of Europe in which morals are better regulated, work better paid, or education widerspread? Is there a country in Europe where you can find such natural riches, and such energy to employ them; so many people with a consciousness of their own intellectual and moral force; so many free schools where the child of the millionaire and the child of the poor man study side by side; so many free libraries where the boy in rags may enter and read the history of his country, and be fired with the exploits of its heroes? Can you name a country with so many learned societies, so many newspapers, so many charitable institutions, or so much widespread comfort?

M. Renan, one day wishing to turn himself into a prophet of ill omen, predicted that, if France continued Republican, she would become a second America.

May nothing worse befall her!

THE END.

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